

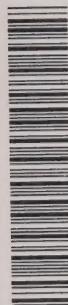
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**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

No. 11

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

N° 11

1st Session
42nd Parliament

Monday
30 July 2018

1^{re} session
42^e législature

Lundi
30 juillet 2018

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Todd Decker



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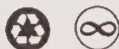
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 30 July 2018

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 30 juillet 2018

The House met at 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Let us pray.
Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Jill Andrew: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome our visitors today. Within about a day or so, Toronto mobilized and came together under the banner of our city hall. We welcome you here this morning.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We need to keep the introductions brief. There may be many.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'd like to introduce a guest of mine up in the east members' gallery: my son Rodney Bailey from the ridings of both Sarnia–Lambton and Oxford.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I would like to welcome Adam Machado and Brandon Machado, young leaders from York South–Weston.

Mr. Vincent Ke: I would like to welcome Mr. Alan Kasperski from my riding of Don Valley North. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Please help me welcome my hard-working constituency office staff: Afie Mardukhi, Aafaaq Shaikh and Wendy Weston; and summer student extraordinaire Hakan Balpinarli.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I want to welcome Steven Mirtsos, who is with us today. He is a student at Ryerson University from my riding, and was a great volunteer for myself. He knocked on countless doors. Welcome, Steven.

Ms. Doly Begum: I would like to introduce my friend and former MP Matthew Kellway, sitting right over there, as well as a friend, Hamdi Ji, who is from the Toronto Youth Cabinet.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'd like to welcome today Peter Gatti, a local Davenport community activist, and also my daughters, Lila and Mahala Berger-Stiles, who are in the members' gallery today.

I'd also like to acknowledge Amin Ali, who is the Toronto District School Board student trustee.

Mr. Aris Babikian: I would like to welcome Aris Mousessian, one of my volunteers who helped me in the campaign. Welcome, Aris Jr.

Mr. Tom Rakocovic: I'd like to warmly welcome former member of the Legislature Anthony Perruzza, his wife, Kayla, his daughter Angelica and his son Antonio.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We are pleased to welcome Mr. Perruzza, who was a member of provincial

Parliament for the 35th Parliament, if I recall correctly. Welcome.

Do we have any further introductions of visitors? The member for Toronto–Danforth.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'd like to welcome Jean Lim O'Brien, her son Sean O'Brien, and Lester Brown. Welcome to the Legislature. I hope it's illuminating.

Ms. Suze Morrison: I was also going to introduce Lester Brown, but I was beat to it.

I'd also like to welcome to the Legislature Jennifer Hollett, who is the Toronto city councillor candidate for the new ward 21. She's not in the room right now. I understand she's just outside doing media.

I'd also like to welcome Brian Chang, who I understand hasn't made it into the gallery as well, but is here.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I'd like to introduce a former member of the provincial Legislature. George Smitherman is here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Yes, indeed. The member for Toronto Centre–Rosedale in the 37th Parliament, the member for Toronto Centre–Rosedale in the 38th Parliament and the member for Toronto Centre in the 39th Parliament—again, we extend our welcome.

JERRY GADWA

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I believe we have unanimous consent for a moment of silence to honour the life of Jerry Gadwa, the firefighter who lost his life in northern Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is there unanimous consent to have a moment's silence to honour the passing of the firefighter? Agreed? Agreed.

Will you please rise.

The House observed a moment's silence.

NOTICES OF REASONED AMENDMENTS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Toronto–Danforth and the member for Ottawa–Vanier have filed with the Clerk reasoned amendments to the motion for second reading of Bill 4, An Act respecting the preparation of a climate change plan, providing for the wind down of the cap and trade program and repealing the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016.

The order for second reading of Bill 4 may therefore not be called today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question is for the Premier. The Premier's secret plot to interfere in municipal elections is the act of a bully, not a leader. He never campaigned on it. He never consulted anyone on it, and now he has no mandate whatsoever to inflict his own will on the people of Toronto, Niagara, Peel, York and Muskoka with the most antidemocratic action that this province has seen in years.

When did he decide to be a bully instead of a Premier?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll ask the Premier to take his seat.

1040

I'm going to caution the House on the use of language. We have to ensure that the Speaker can maintain decorum in this House, and inflammatory language makes it much more difficult to do that. So I would caution members on their language.

Response. Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition: I criss-crossed this province and campaigned on accountability, trust and reducing the size and cost of government.

Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I fought for the people of this great city for years to reduce the size and cost of government. When I talked to thousands of people in the city of Toronto, not one single person came up to me and said, "Doug, I want more politicians." They want less politicians. They want that money to go to priorities that matter to them. They want to make sure the \$25 million that are saved are going to go to infrastructure, transit that's in gridlock—it's gridlocked just like city hall has been gridlocked for decades.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Stop the clock. Please take your seats.

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier cooked up his backroom plot to steal power from the people and kept it hidden from 14 million Ontarians for the entire election campaign. There was no consultation and no fair process. That means that, today, there's absolutely no legitimate mandate for this Premier to cancel regional elections and rip up Toronto's wards.

Why is this Premier inflicting his will on millions of voters when he never told them the truth about what he was going to do?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response. Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: I talked to tens of thousands of people across this province. I talked to thousands of people in Toronto, and every single person I spoke to in

Toronto said that city hall is dysfunctional. It's not getting transit—

Interjections.

Hon. Doug Ford: It has not even put a shovel in the ground for transit in over 20 years. Housing is backlogged by a billion dollars. Infrastructure is crumbling right underneath our feet.

We're going to reallocate that money to things that matter and priorities for the people. We don't believe in bigger government. We don't believe in more politicians or more bureaucracy. We're going to make sure the city of Toronto finally runs more efficiently. My friends—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier's secret plot, cooked up in a backroom and hidden from the people of Ontario for the entire election campaign, doesn't just fit the very definition of a hidden agenda, it's also petty and mean-spirited and it's the vendetta of a man who doesn't want to lead, Speaker. Instead, he wants to bully his way through. He wants to get his own way and exact revenge on his old political opponents.

Why is this Premier abusing his power and showing such contempt for the people of Ontario?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: The difference between myself and the Leader of the Opposition—

Interjections.

Hon. Doug Ford: The Leader of the Opposition wants to talk about bullying. I'll tell you the definition of bullying, when it comes to the Leader of the Opposition: cutting 7,000 jobs, laying off 7,000 jobs, at the Pickering power station. They would still be looking at how to put food on their table if it was up to you.

We're reducing council by 25 politicians—22 politicians; it should be 25. Twenty-two politicians, and people love the idea. Out of anything I've ever done in politics, I've never had a better response than I've had about reducing the size and cost of government. My friends, even my neighbour—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seat.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Premier will take his seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The House will come to order. Thank you.

Next question.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. The Premier's plot to undermine Toronto city council and stop elections in Peel, York, Niagara and Muskoka is an assault on our democracy. It robs people of their voice. It robs the people of Toronto of their right to decide how many councillors they elect, and it shows

that the Premier is not interested in doing what's right for Ontario. He's driven by his own desire for power.

Why is this Premier trying to control Toronto city hall from the Premier's office?

Hon. Doug Ford: In the city of Toronto, we have 25 MPs, we have 25 MPPs, and some of those ridings are larger than Prince Edward Island. They're larger than some provinces that your MPPs and my MPPs have to cover.

I can assure you that when we have 25 councillors, it's going to be 500,000 less sheets of paper. I'm protecting the environment. I'm protecting trees, because there's going to be less bureaucracy. It's going to make the mayor's job easier. It's going to make fellow councillors' jobs easier. It's going to make the clerk's job a lot easier, because right now, with 47 people, it would be dysfunctional. Nothing gets done at city hall. There's gridlock on our streets, and there's gridlock at city hall. Nothing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Stop the clock. Take your seats, please. Restart the clock.

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The number of councillors that Toronto needs to serve the people of this city is a decision that belongs to the people of this city. But this Premier doesn't care. All he cares about is inflicting his will and his own whims on the people of this city.

Why is this Premier trying to rig local elections? Just to put more power in his own hands?

Hon. Doug Ford: The Leader of the Opposition wouldn't know what it is to serve the people of Toronto because you've never done it. You've never gone out there. You've never talked to the people of Toronto.

Let's do a little comparison here: We have Los Angeles at four million people; we're about half the size, and we have 47 councillors. Mr. Speaker, when I went to Los Angeles and I told the people we had 44 councillors, they said, "How can you get anything done?" My answer was: "We never get anything done." No one gets anything done, because there are too many politicians, too many fiefdoms down there, in the interest of themselves.

I'm glad that my neighbour Councillor Perruzza is here, because we had many conversations, and every other councillor, all 44, have agreed that city hall is dysfunctional. Nothing is happening but spending—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will please take their seats. Restart the clock.

Final supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Interfering in the middle of local elections to steal power away from the voters is not an act—

Interjections.

Hon. Todd Smith: He runs the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I don't need any help, thank you.

I have to ask the member to withdraw.

1050

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw.

Interfering in the middle of local elections to take power away from the voters is not an act of leadership, Speaker. It is an abuse of power.

Taking revenge on political opponents does not show strength. It is a deeply chilling sign of weakness and insecurity.

And hiding one's secret plans during an entire election campaign does not show respect for voters. It demonstrates utter contempt for the people of Ontario.

Why is this Premier acting like a dictator?

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition: You go to the people. Maybe we should go out to the people in the streets, door-knock, and ask what they want. Do they want 25 more politicians that they weren't consulted with, or do they want less politicians? Do they want more police or do they want 800 less police than when I was there to protect the streets? Do they want more transit or do they want less transit? Do they want higher taxes or lower taxes? Because we know you want higher taxes. You want big government. You want a dysfunctional government.

We're going to reduce the size and cost of government, we're going to save the taxpayers \$25 million, and we're going to get things going once and for all with transit. We will get this city moving again.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

If you could restart the clock. Next question.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The question is to the Premier, who just indicated that this really is all about him. Let's not forget that this Premier could not get elected as mayor of Toronto. He was soundly defeated by the people of this great city.

In June, the vast majority of Torontonians once again rejected this Premier. But instead of accepting Toronto's verdict, this Premier is trying to settle political scores with the people of this city.

Why is the Premier trying to punish the people of Toronto?

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, granted, I only ended up with 330,000 votes when I ran for mayor, in five weeks. That's more than all the NDPs combined in the city of Toronto.

I think we did a pretty good job in the last provincial election. It's like throwing boulders in a glass house.

Leader of the Opposition: People want less government. They want lower taxes. We aren't going to be laying 7,000 people off, like you were going to up in Pickering. We're going to create jobs, we're going to create transit, we're going to fix the infrastructure, and we're going to take care of the \$1-billion backlog of housing. People are sleeping on the streets because too much money is going to politicians, not into the taxpayers' pocket—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Restart the clock. Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I would dare say that most Ontarians and most Canadians want democracy, not dictatorship, Speaker—democracy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Once again, I'm going to caution the House and the members who are asking questions today on the use of inflammatory language. We have to ensure that this debate continues in a respectful and civil manner to the greatest extent possible, as we all expect and hope we could achieve today.

Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the Premier's decision to behave in this way instead of acting like a leader is the most revealing thing that he has done yet. By keeping his plot secret for the entire election campaign, he has shown that his word is, in fact, worthless. He has revealed that he will steal power away from the people he disagrees with and he will abuse his own office just to—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw.

He will abuse his own office to take mean-spirited revenge on his political opponents.

Why does this Premier have no idea how to act like a Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Speaker, through you: Leader of the Opposition, you won't ever have to worry about acting like a leader. You will never have to worry about that. Democracy took place on June 7, when the greater Toronto area and the rest of province decided they want smaller government. They want less taxes. They want lower hydro rates. They want accountability for the first time they've seen in God knows how long.

Leader of the Opposition, you're going to have a chance to vote on this—all the power to you. The people voted on June 7 to make sure we start respecting the taxpayers, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Before I call for the next question, I would remind all members that you make your remarks through the Chair.

Next question.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Roman Baber: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, what a wonderful weekend in Toronto. As a resident of north Toronto, I am excited about our government's plan to enable Toronto to save on costs, streamline decision-making and ensure equal representation for all Toronto residents on city council.

Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing tell us how the government is helping Toronto with the upcoming municipal election?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for the question. Local governments deliver critical services to residents. It's in everyone's interest that they are efficient and respect taxpayers' dollars. Speaker, we believe that

the taxpayer in Toronto will benefit from the changes that are proposed in the bill.

I understand that the municipal election period is already under way. Voting day is just three months away. That's why my ministry intends to work with the city to mitigate operational issues under this proposed legislation and to allow candidates to develop revised plans. We're going to be sitting down with the clerk's office. We're going to be extending the nomination period for those council and school board candidates to September 14.

I can tell the member more in the supplementary, but we're working with the city on this issue.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will please take your seats. Restart the clock.

Supplementary?

Mr. Roman Baber: Back to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: Thank you very much, Minister. It's great to hear that you have Toronto's needs in mind, and I'm more optimistic than ever about the future of the city.

Would the minister go back and ask Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer to share the most recent voters list with the city clerk?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, I want to thank the member. I'm very glad you asked this question. As I said, I believe the taxpayer of Toronto will benefit from the proposed changes in this bill as soon as possible. That's why we've already had conversations with Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer, Greg Essensa. Should the city of Toronto require or request some assistance, the Chief Electoral Officer has agreed to assist the city with moving forward to those new electoral boundaries, including providing revision and updated information from the most recent election.

If passed, Speaker, our proposed legislation would align Toronto's municipal boundaries with those that are already in existence with the federal government and with the members that we just had during the election.

Speaker, we are taking decisive action so that, on October 22, Torontonians can vote for a streamlined government, one that is—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Next question?

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Suze Morrison: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier tell Ontarians exactly where in his plan for the people he said that he would specifically cut Toronto city council in half in the middle of our election?

1100

Hon. Doug Ford: When I was down at city council, I put it to a vote. I spoke a hundred times about reducing the size and cost of government. As a matter of fact, if you saw on Friday, we had a diverse group of councillors, and you'll probably see them today come down to support reducing the size and cost of government. We had over 12 councillors come out who said, "This is the

right decision. Forty-four councillors, no; it's dysfunctional down there."

Nothing is getting done except wasting taxpayers' money and getting into more debt. We're feeling the pressure of over \$550 million down at the city, and they aren't coming to ask to get bailed out, I can guarantee you that. They're going to start taking care of their own house with a smaller government. Good governance in any corporation is seven to nine because you can't get anything done if you have 20 people around the table—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The members will please take their seats.

Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Ms. Suze Morrison: The Premier has no mandate to interfere entirely on his own in Toronto's election. Why does the Premier think that he knows better than the people of Toronto?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, during the election, we committed to bringing accountability and trust back to government. We also agreed to reduce the size and cost of government. We believe that under this proposed legislation—

Mr. Michael Coteau: Go to some other cities, then, Steve.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Don Valley East.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Don Valley East must come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark: We believe that on October 22, under this proposed legislation, the people of Toronto will have a streamlined council that is ready to work, ready to make those important, efficient and effective decisions on behalf of their constituents, to have the right priorities under an effective council. This is very important for us. We talked about reducing the size and cost of government—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Next question.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mrs. Robin Martin: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Our government for the people is committed to reducing the size and cost of government. Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing tell us about the steps that the government is taking?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for the question. During the campaign, we received a very strong message from Ontarians, that they wanted us to respect taxpayers' dollars. On June 7, it was clear that they wanted a government that got things done. And, Speaker, that's exactly what we're going to do.

Today I will propose legislation that, if passed, would reduce the number of Toronto councillors to 25. Speaker,

as you know, local government delivers critical services to their residents. It's in everyone's interest that they do so in an effective and efficient manner for their taxpayers. Torontonians, as I've said, can now vote under this proposed legislation for a streamlined council that, when elected, is ready to work on the priorities of its constituents.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will please take their seats.

Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Back to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: Thank you very much, Minister, for the answer. This is great news for Toronto and for the people and the council.

Can the minister tell the House how this legislation would not only benefit Toronto council, but would also improve the lives of all Torontonians?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, I want to thank the member. As I said earlier, the proposed legislation would reduce the number of Toronto councillors to 25. This is a meaningful change that will dramatically improve the decision-making process at the city of Toronto. For too long, Speaker, that process has been discussions that have went around and around and around, and not been able to make those important decisions.

We believe that this bill will allow the city to make those important decisions, whether they be on infrastructure or whether they be on housing or transit. To have a streamlined council that can make decisions faster, and that, at the same time, over the four years, would save Toronto taxpayers \$25 million—that's an important dollar figure, Speaker. It will allow the city to make quick decisions, but it will also provide a financial benefit to those constituents—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Next question.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. When did the Premier tell the minister his plan to interfere in Toronto's election during the middle of their campaign? When?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the member: It's very important for me to remind the member of the message that both our party and his party and the other parties received in the June 7 election. Make no mistake: We received a very clear mandate for accountability and trust, and to put that back into government.

We also made it very clear during the election—and I want to remind the member—that discussing reducing the size and cost of government was something that my Premier and members of my caucus made countless times during the election. We went through this campaign, and the Premier and our members talked to tens of thousands of Ontarians. They talked about the interest and the information to be able to provide this to the House today.

As I said before, my plan is to propose this legislation. It will dramatically cut the size of Toronto city council. But it will, more importantly—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: The Premier didn't campaign on interfering in Toronto's election in the middle of a campaign. It didn't come up until Thursday night, three months after the municipal election began. It wasn't in his platform. He didn't mention it in a single debate. He didn't tell Ontarians.

When, Minister, did the Premier tell you his plan?

Hon. Steve Clark: I thank the member for the question. No one in Ontario believes that we need more politicians to make a decision. Any oversized council makes it almost impossible to make those decisions on behalf of their constituents. We believe that the proposed legislation would streamline council and make better decisions.

I don't know about the member, but I certainly believe that having 25 MPs covering an electoral district and 25 MPPs covering the same electoral district is out of touch with having 25 city councillors deal with that same electoral district. I think it provides better government. I think it provides better decisions, faster decisions to be able to deal with the priorities of the citizens of Toronto.

I ask the member: Join us in supporting this proposed legislation.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: My question is for the Premier. Your overnight decision to meddle in the Ontario municipal elections is concerning. Again and again, you drive chaos through this system. Given that the elections have already begun as of May 1—with hundreds of candidates already registered, signs that have been purchased and people who have signed up—this creates chaos at a time when we need stability and strong leadership to focus on things like NAFTA.

The Premier is sending a message to investors that he can't manage a stable government. He speaks out of both sides of his mouth. Consultations—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would ask the member—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seat. I'd ask the member to withdraw.

1110

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I withdraw, Speaker.

Why consultations for sexual education and not for municipal election decisions? Will the Premier commit to consultations in this instance for the city of Toronto?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for the question. As I said, our proposed legislation will change, for this election, the number of councillors within the city of Toronto.

On Friday, we talked about the changes we are proposing that would allow the nomination period to be extended from Friday, July 27, the Friday that was past, to September 14. We've committed, as I said earlier today, to work with the clerk on those transitional issues for candidates. We've also reached out to Ontario's Chief Electoral Officer to try to help the municipality deal with the most important aspect of the newest possible voters list. We're going to continue to work with the clerk's office and the city of Toronto as we manage over the proposed piece of legislation.

Again, it goes back to the underlying principle. We campaigned on respecting taxpayers' dollars—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Mr. Speaker, to the minister, then: Like most people, I was shocked to learn from the Toronto Star overnight that this government is planning to cancel regional chair elections and interfering with local races in Toronto.

From the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing—a former mayor, in fact—we expect better. You stood in this House and voted in favour of the bill for an elected chair in York region, saying, "We all agree that this bill would increase the accountability and make the system more democratic, and the people of York region want ... change."

Minister, why have you changed your tune?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to again thank the member for the question. The Liberals imposed the bill on this House in 2016. There were many stakeholders who felt it needed to be hitting a pause. The Premier and I on Friday talked about hitting a pause on those four regional governments. They'll go back to the way they operated in the 2014 election. It remains unchanged for the other three regional governments.

I think we were very clear that we are going to move forward with those changes as well as the city of Toronto changes today in the proposed bill. I look forward to engaging our regional government partners in a couple of weeks at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference. We're going to start the dialogue on an informal basis, and we'll probably have something more formal in the fall.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Our government for the people is committed to restoring accountability and trust and bringing efficiency back to government.

Can the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing tell us what our government is doing to help regional government work more effectively and efficiently for their taxpayers?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Brampton South for that question. As I said earlier, it's my intention to present legislation that, if passed, would put a pause on changes brought in in 2016, without con-

sultation, to create a new layer of politicians, elected regional chairs, in York, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka.

Speaker, the last thing that families, businesses and municipal leaders in these regions need is another layer of politicians. We're proposing to go back to the way it was before 2016. The other regional governments would continue to elect their representatives as normal, but in York, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka we're going to take a pause. We intend to reverse legislation imposed on municipalities in 2016.

This is another example, Speaker, of our government getting out of the way and allowing those councils to work in the best interests of their people.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Back to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Thank you very much, Minister, and thank you for acting now to reverse legislation that was unfairly imposed on municipalities.

What about the other regions? Can the minister tell the House how the government intends to make sure all regional governments in Ontario work more effectively and efficiently for the people?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, I want to thank the member for the question. Speaker, our government for the people is committed to finding the most effective and most efficient ways for municipalities to work for their taxpayers. As the Premier has said, one thing every politician at every level in every region needs to understand and remember is that we all share the same boss. We all work for the people.

We're going to take a long look at regional government, Speaker: where things have worked and where they haven't worked so well. I'm going to start this review informally, at our discussion at the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in the city of Ottawa. I really want to hear from municipal leaders at that conference, in an informal setting, how they feel things have worked and, in some cases, things they would like to change. After that review, we'll have more discussions, perhaps in a more formal—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.
Next question.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Sara Singh: My question is for the Premier. In Brampton, we welcomed the opportunity to finally elect a chair to the region of Peel, so we were shocked to learn that, without any public input, this government has decided to drag Brampton backwards. And now this government has taken away the democratic voice of 1.4 million residents in the region of Peel. The people in my community deserve to elect a chair.

Can the Premier explain why he is taking away our community's right to elect their government?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I know the people in Brampton very well, extremely well. As a matter of fact, I know the people in Brampton Centre very well, and I think I'm going to do a little door-knock-ing there to find out, when I door-knock, "Do you want

more politicians? Do you want more layers of government? Because your MPP wants bigger government, more taxes."

I can promise you not one single person in Brampton Centre wants more politicians, wants higher taxes. They want lower taxes. That's what the people of Brampton Centre want. And if I went up to them and said, "Would you be happy to trade in a bunch of politicians for millions of dollars of services?" they would say, "Show 'em the door," and that's what we're going to do.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The House will come to order. Restart the clock.

Supplementary?

Ms. Sara Singh: Back to the Premier: During this government's short time in office, we have seen back-room deal after backroom deal, leaving the people of Ontario worse off. Now the Premier has suddenly taken away the right of a community to elect their own regional chair. This type of unilateral meddling does nothing but move our communities backwards.

1120

I ask you: Which of your insider friends are you propping up to power by manipulating the election in Peel region?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seats.
Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Back in 2016, I don't remember any consultation happening when the previous government rammed it down the throats of the region of Peel, to have duplication of government. I don't remember any consultation when the city wanted to increase politicians, three more politicians. I don't remember any consultation about raising taxes or increasing politicians, but I can tell—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I ask the Premier to take his seat.

The official opposition has to come to order. I can't hear the Premier.

Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: I just want to remind the Leader of the Opposition and the NDP—you mentioned me running for mayor. I ended up getting 88,646 more votes than the NDP, all combined, in the city of Toronto. So thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Order. Members will take their seats.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. We still have 20 minutes.

Start the clock. The member for Parry Sound-Muskoka.

FIREFIGHTING IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Norman Miller: My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

We've all heard the tragic news of Jerry Gadwa of the Kehewin First Nation community in northern Alberta, who died while supporting the fire suppression efforts in Red Lake, Ontario. On behalf of the people of Ontario, I would like to thank him for his services and express my heartfelt condolences to his family. He will always be remembered as a hero.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry provide this House with an update on how fire suppression efforts are progressing across Ontario?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Thank you to the member for the question. I also would like to once again express the government's condolences to Mr. Gadwa's family. I think it's very important that we recognize the bravery and courage that Mr. Gadwa displayed in the name of providing for his family and protecting those areas to which he was deployed. I would like to also express my appreciation to all the staff and volunteers who continue to do their part.

To this date, we have received support from our provincial partners as well as from the United States and Mexico. We anticipate more fire rangers coming from Mexico and more equipment from our provincial partners. We're also exploring an option that would allow retired rangers to come back on the job on a temporary basis to provide added assistance and expertise.

Again, our top priority is the safety of the public, protection of property and the safety of our emergency responders.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Norman Miller: Back to the minister: I want to thank all the firefighters from Ontario, other provinces, the United States and Mexico who are working so hard to fight the many fires around northern Ontario. In particular, I want to thank those who are fighting Parry Sound 33 in the north end of my riding. I was pleased to join the minister and the Premier in visiting the brave men and women fighting Parry Sound 33 on Friday.

Can the minister share with this House and with the people of my riding what is being done to stop this and other fires?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Thank you again for that question. Yes, on Friday the Premier, the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka and myself visited the Britt command centre near Parry Sound to visit those who are fighting the fires and to see the effects for ourselves. We must say, we were truly amazed at the dedication and professionalism of the command centre and those doing their part to keep Ontarians safe.

Currently the fire situation across northern and central Ontario is still active. This is because of warm temperatures, windy conditions, minimal precipitation and frequent thunderstorms with plenty of lightning. We are actively monitoring the fire situation and fighting key fires from the air and on the ground.

Our top priority, as I said earlier, is the safety of the public, protection of property and the safety of our emergency responders. We are fully prepared and ready to protect the public and our natural resources, and I've instructed my department to explore all options as to how we can continue to assist with, and dedicate resources to, these fires.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: My question is for the Premier. Does the Premier believe that consulting with the public is important to the political process, yes or no?

Hon. Doug Ford: Municipal affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member. My Premier has consulted with tens of thousands of people during the election campaign. You know what, Speaker? It was crystal clear during that election that Ontarians embraced our message to respect taxpayers' dollars.

As well, we talked countless times during the campaign about bringing accountability and trust back into this government, to again move forward our legislative agenda where I'll be proposing legislation that will reduce the number of councillors in the city of Toronto, that will press a pause on the regional government changes that the previous government imposed in 2016.

We believe very strongly that the mandate we received and the message that we were given during that election was to respect taxpayers' dollars, to make government accountable and efficient. That's what we're doing in the city of Toronto. I look forward to discussing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Mr. Speaker, this government just can't seem to keep their argument straight. First they go on about the importance of—and I quote the Deputy Premier here—"a proper end-to-end consultation that is completely inclusive and that hears from everyone." And then, days later, they turn around and force changes on communities like Niagara, with no word from the people.

We have seen this government rail on and on and on about the importance of public consultation, but they only seem to care when it suits their far-right extremist friends. If public consultation is such an important part of this political process for the Conservatives, why did they think it was appropriate to skip it when removing democratic rights from the people of Niagara?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will please take their seats.

Minister?

Hon. Steve Clark: No one but the New Democrats believes that having more politicians is the right thing to do. Over and over again we'll hear from this side of the House talking about a bloated government, more government and more politicians. I don't believe that having more politicians is the right way to go.

We heard clearly during the campaign to respect taxpayers' dollars, to bring back accountability, transparency and trust in government. We're moving forward to reduce the size of government, to make it more streamlined, to be able to make decisions faster for the priorities of their constituents. I'm not surprised that New Democrats are against having efficient government.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. The House will come to order.

Next question. The member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington. Start the clock.

TAXATION

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly appreciate the calm in the House right now.

My question is to the Minister of the Environment. Our government was elected on a clear, clear mandate to put people first, and to make life affordable for families in Ontario. That included a commitment to taxpayers to show respect for their hard-earned money.

In her value-for-money review, the Auditor General looked at the previous government's cap-and-trade scheme. It was concluded the program would cost \$8 billion. It would "not significantly lower emissions within the province." In fact, the Auditor General went on to say that this program would achieve only 20% of its desired results. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, that is not value for money. The taxpayers of Ontario deserve more.

1130

Will the Minister of the Environment please assure this House and address the real challenges we face with respect to taxpayers and the—

Interjections.

Hon. Rod Phillips: I thank the member from Hastings–Lennox and Addington for the question.

As we know and as we've discussed, the previous government's cap-and-trade carbon tax was an ineffective program. He quite rightly reminds us that the Auditor General confirmed, through her approach to this, that the government cap-and-trade would actually cost businesses and consumers \$8 billion, and it would only see a slight reduction in emissions. As was mentioned, the talk that it would fall 80% short of the targets that were set was surprising to Ontarians. That is why we ran on a program that would eliminate that. That is why we are saying that the era of carbon tax in Ontario is over.

The NDP would continue that program. The NDP would, in fact, build on that program. The NDP has talked about the highest carbon tax in the world. Our government will stand up for taxpayers. Our government will eliminate the carbon tax.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I certainly thank the minister for his answer that does respect taxpayers.

The conclusion reached by the Auditor General, of course, was the same conclusion reached by the people on June 7. The Liberals' cap-and-trade carbon scheme is nothing more than a complete tax grab.

For years, families have struggled with the increased costs associated with this tax, and I hear stories, and most members do, everywhere we go. I know that's why my constituents are excited to hear that our government is now moving quickly on our promise to eliminate the cap-and-trade scheme that truly punishes families.

Mr. Speaker, we promised that relief would be on the way for the hard-working people of Ontario. Promises made—

Interjections: Promises kept.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Could the Minister of the Environment commit to my constituents that true relief is on the way?

Hon. Rod Phillips: As with the member, I heard the same thing from my constituents in Ajax. People are tired of being taxed for everything that they do. We are winding down this program to help working families, to help families in Ontario and make sure that they benefit from the program—cheaper gas prices, lower energy bills and more money in their pockets. Eliminating the cap-and-trade carbon tax will save the average family \$260 a year, every year.

In addition to saving families money, it will lower the burden for Ontario business. It's anticipated that through the cancellation of the cap-and-trade carbon tax, Ontario will create an estimated 14,000 jobs.

Our legislation is great news for the people of Ontario. As the member said, promises made, promises kept.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Marit Stiles: My question is for the Premier. Why has this Conservative government singled out Toronto city council specifically—not any other municipality—with this unilateral action to slash the number of Toronto city councillors? Is it because he has a score to settle with Torontonians who rejected him as mayor?

Hon. Doug Ford: Member of the opposition, we had an election. The people of Toronto, they were very clear. We ended up with more votes than all of the opposition, we ended up with more votes than the NDP, to fulfil our commitment of reducing the size and cost of government.

We were very clear that we're going to have a smaller government. We were very clear about saving taxpayers money, reducing their hydro rates, reducing taxes, getting infrastructure built, getting transit built, taking care of the backlog of housing. That's what our mandate was, and that was the mandate the people of Toronto and Ontario gave to our party, to move forward. That's exactly what we're going to do.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: This government is proposing to slash the number of Toronto city councillors from 47 to just 25.

Interjection: Shame.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, shame on you. This is being done despite the fact that the city spent two years consulting on this issue—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. I'll give the member extra time.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, thank you.

This is being done despite the fact that the city spent two years consulting on this issue and concluded that 47 councillors would be the best in terms of representation and ensuring that every voter is treated equally. Now Toronto will have the same number of councillors as Ottawa, a city with one third of Toronto's population.

So I ask you again: Why is this Conservative government undermining the foundations of our—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I apologize to the member that I had to interrupt her question. I would ask the government side—she's 10 feet away from me and I can't hear her. I'm going to let the member repeat her question so I can hear it.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I ask you again, Mr. Speaker: Why is this Conservative government undermining the foundations of our democracy in order to take revenge on old foes?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Member of the opposition, did you see the 12 councillors stand up, the fiscally conservative councillors representing close to two million people in the city of Toronto? They know what their constituents want. They want smaller government. They want transit built for the first time ever in Toronto. That's why we're going to be uploading the subway system. That's why we're finally going to build subways—for the people of Scarborough, Mitzie. Actually, subways are coming to Scarborough.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

Ms. Jane McKenna: My question is for the President of the Treasury Board. My constituents in Burlington are concerned about the state of Ontario's books. Under the previous Liberal government, they have seen our province's debt climb to become the highest of any sub-national jurisdiction in the world. They are also worried that we don't know yet the whole truth. They watched as the Auditor General called into question the previous government's accounting practices and discovered that their promises to return to a balanced budget were hiding an even bigger structural deficit than we imagined.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain how our government for the people will begin to dig Ontario out of this mess?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to the member from Burlington. Let your constituents in Burlington know that help is on the way.

We know that Ontario doesn't have a revenue problem, Mr. Speaker, but under the previous government it certainly had a spending problem. We have been clear since day one that we will put Ontario on a healthy financial footing and we will ensure that the province can afford to strengthen and maintain the vital public services the province depends on.

That is why our government has launched an Independent Financial Commission of Inquiry to show us how the province got into this mess, and a line-by-line audit which will begin to show us the way out. This audit will provide the government with a detailed analysis of current spending, benchmark this against other jurisdictions, and recommend areas that can be improved. Mr. Speaker, the government—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Supplementary question?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Speaker, back to the minister: I thank the minister for his answer and his diligence in ensuring Ontarians can trust the government's books. I know the people of my riding and across Ontario are looking to the government to find efficiencies while continuing to deliver our vital services in an effective way.

Can the minister please update the House on our government's efforts to restore the confidence of taxpayers that their money is being spent with prudence and care?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you again to the member from Burlington for that important question.

We promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would put an end to the party with the taxpayers' money. We know that fiscal reviews like this one have the greatest potential to help target efforts to find solutions. Mr. Speaker, that is why I'm proud our government has wasted no time in launching a line-by-line audit. This audit includes a clear commitment to transformational change while protecting front-line jobs and services.

1140

Mr. Speaker, we are not only restoring trust and accountability; we are ensuring Ontario is strongly positioned to deliver high-quality, sustainable public services now and in the future. The government and our Premier will not stop until we have restored responsibility and Ontario's finances to a healthy place once again.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Start the clock.

Next question?

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Gurratan Singh: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The Premier cannot just wake up one day and unilaterally decide to change the municipal electoral landscape and cancel elections. Money has already been invested and campaigns have been under way for months.

Does the minister know how much this undemocratic decision will actually cost in court challenges that will inevitably come forward?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, I want to thank the member for the question.

I think my Premier was very clear. We had an election. He spoke to many people in the city of Brampton about respecting taxpayers' dollars, about making sure that government at all levels is more effective and more efficient.

Our proposed legislation, other than the changes for the city of Toronto, will only deal with the four regional governments that were part of this previous government's 2016 legislation. All we're doing is pressing the pause button while we move forward with a discussion with our municipal partners about—

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: I know that the opposition benches are going to howl because they're always going to stand up for bigger government, they're always going to stand up for more politicians. That's not the message that we heard from Ontarians. We heard very clearly to respect taxpayers' dollars and to reduce the size and cost of government. That's—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary question?

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is acting like a dictator, changing the rules—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Order.

The member must withdraw.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Question?

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Changing the rules midway through the campaign. We know at least one court challenge has already been filed.

Again, can the minister tell us how much Ontarians will be on the hook for fighting court challenges caused by this dictator-like plot?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response? Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker. It's very regrettable, some of the words that are being used in this Legislature today—very regrettable.

Our government for the people is committed to finding effective and efficient ways for government to deliver services.

Again, Speaker, in terms of the regional governments, it's only the four that were dealt with in the previous government's 2016 legislation.

I've mentioned very, very clearly that we're going to start an informal discussion with our governments at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in a couple of weeks in the city of Ottawa. We want to engage them to find out things that have worked in our regional government system and also things that I think we need to improve on. It's all, again, a part of us having an efficient and effective way to deliver public services and especially those municipal services that are the

closest services to the people. We want to respect those municipalities. We want to engage them—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Next question?

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. David Piccini: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

I was out on Friday consulting with the good folks of Alnwick Haldimand township. In fact, Mr. Minister, I met with the mayor. Do you know that the first thing the mayor told me was that the first move they made to restore accountability and trust was to reduce the size of their municipality? As a result, they've been better able to deliver municipal services to their constituents.

My question is for the minister: What is this government doing to ensure we better respect the hard-earned tax dollars of Ontarians?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, I want to thank the member for the question. There's no doubt, Speaker, that we, on this side of the House, believe in better local government. During our last campaign, we heard very clearly to respect taxpayers' dollars. With the changes that are proposed in this legislation, we want to get to the point that on October 22, the people of Toronto can vote for a streamlined council—just like the council that you talked about. They will vote for a streamlined council that will be ready to make quick decisions in the best interests of their taxpayers. It's the right decision to do.

I, again, ask the members opposite: Join us in making efficient and effective local government something that—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The members will please take their seats.

That concludes question period for today.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Toronto Centre has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Premier concerning Toronto's municipal election. This matter will therefore be debated Tuesday at 6 p.m.

There being no deferred votes, this House is recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1146 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I just would like to introduce a former deputy leader of the Green Party of Ontario, Peter Elgie. He comes from a long line of parliamentarians. His grandfather, Goldwin Elgie, served in this Legislature in the 1930s and 1940s. His dad, Bob Elgie, served in the Legislature from 1977 to 1985. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I would like to introduce my best friend and my biggest supporter: my husband, Jon Martin, who is in the gallery today to hear my inaugural address.

Ms. Suze Morrison: I'd like to introduce Chris Moise and Jennifer Hollett, who are in the members' gallery. They are both municipal candidates in the upcoming Toronto election.

Mr. Bill Walker: I welcome a few Toronto city councillors who are here to witness the tabling of the legislation. They are Michael Ford, Stephen Holyday, David Shiner, Giorgio Mammoliti, Cesar Palacio, Jim Karygiannis, Justin Di Ciano, Michael Thompson, Frances Nunziata, Glenn de Baeremaeker, Vincent Crisanti and Michelle Holland.

Ms. Sara Singh: I'd like to introduce two fantastic young women who have been integral in helping me get elected to this magnificent post. I'd like to introduce Jasdeep Grewal and Bhani Whadwa, who are now officially hired on as my constituency assistants.

Ms. Jill Andrew: I want to acknowledge and thank friend Megann Wilson, municipal candidate in ward 23—she was here earlier—and also John Cartwright, president, Toronto and York Region Labour Council, from this morning.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

RIDING OF HAMILTON WEST— ANCASTER-DUNDAS

Ms. Sandy Shaw: The riding I represent, Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas, is a newly created riding, and I am enormously proud to have been given the opportunity to be its very first representative in this House.

As is widely known, Hamilton has a proud history of strength in our steel industry and the good-paying jobs that have contributed to the well-being of our city. What is not as well known is that, in fact, education and health care is the largest employment sector in Hamilton. Its largest employers are Hamilton Health Sciences, McMaster University and Mohawk College, all of which are located in my riding of Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas. We're known as hard workers who are engaged in our neighbourhoods. We lend a helping hand to those who need assistance.

Mr. Speaker, it is with that same sense of community in mind that I would like to mark a significant event that took place at St. Joseph's Villa in Dundas this morning. A ceremonial groundbreaking for Margaret's Place, a new hospice, marked the launch of their Gift of Love campaign.

In Ontario, governments only cover approximately 60% of operating costs for hospice care. So with Margaret's Place in Dundas, it is a comfort to know that those suffering, and their families, will have access to high-quality hospice care in their time of need.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Tomorrow will mark the start of the 2018 Special Olympics in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. The Special Olympics is a great event where hundreds of people aged eight or older from across the country will compete to qualify for the 2019 Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi.

This year will mark the 50th anniversary of the Special Olympics, which was started by the world-famous Canadian medical doctor Dr. Frank Hayden, who lives in our neighbour riding of Burlington. Dr. Hayden was a pioneer in intellectual disability research, especially as it pertained to children, and he was the first to disprove the long-held belief that children who have intellectual disabilities are not capable of participating in play and recreation.

Last week, I had the privilege of meeting a constituent, Aiden Lee, who will be competing in the games. Aiden is 15 years old and will be competing in the swimming events in the games. He is a dedicated athlete who cares about the well-being of his teammates. Aiden visited my constituency office on Friday to share his knowledge of the competition, and asked for Ontario pins for all of his teammates from Oakville that they could proudly wear.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wish all the athletes from Ontario and especially Oakville all the best of luck when competing later this week. I know they will represent their province and their communities with the utmost commitment to the competition and respect of their fellow athletes. I look forward to meeting with Aiden and his teammates upon their return and to share in the celebration recognizing their efforts.

RIDING OF BRAMPTON CENTRE

Ms. Sara Singh: I'd like to thank the people of Brampton Centre for the opportunity to represent the community I've called home since the day I was born, and I'd like to thank all the members that were involved in my campaign and for the opportunity to be here today.

Growing up in Brampton, I've watched us transform into the ninth-largest city in Canada. We are home to Chinguacousy Park, a 100-acre park that is in the heart of my riding, where families in our community gather every week to celebrate and connect. We are home to this country's largest transportation and manufacturing hubs, moving this province's economy forward. We are also home to some of the world's greatest entrepreneurs and artists, like Alessia Cara, Rupri Kaur and Director X.

While I was knocking on doors in my riding, I met with thousands of people, who all indicated to me that one thing was clear: They wanted change. They wanted a government that was going to represent them and put their needs first. I am so proud to stand here and be that voice for my community, and I look forward to representing those diverse voices in this Legislature.

YORK UNIVERSITY MARKHAM CENTRE CAMPUS

Mr. Billy Pang: On July 23, I had the opportunity to stand with Mayor Scarpitti, colleagues and staff for the unveiling event marking York University's Markham campus' latest milestone. The York University Markham Centre campus will be located west of Markham Pan Am Centre and will offer more than 20 degree programs, including business, education, information technology, and software.

Here are just a few numbers of the impact the new campus will make:

- 4,200 students by 2024 will have access to teaching, learning and research.

- 400-plus on-campus jobs will be created.

- \$500 million in economic benefits from the construction.

- \$37 million of annual impact when it is fully operational.

The opening of the 2021 campus will benefit many residents of Markham and York region, allowing them to gain the skills and knowledge in order for them to be part of the 21st-century economy of Ontario. This expansion was made possible through investments made by the provincial government of Ontario, and it's events like this which allow our government to invest in our children's future.

OPIOID ABUSE

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I would like to take a moment to recognize a remarkable member of our community, Mr. Fred Bowering. Fred is a community advocate in St. Catharines who takes it upon himself to fight for compassionate action to be taken in the opioid crisis. He rides his bike to places like Centennial park and to the downtown public library to collect and dispose of discarded needles, sometimes filling multiple containers a day. In 2017, Fred was stuck with a needle at a local park but thankfully did not contract any illness.

In one year, Niagara EMS observed a 335% increase of suspected opioid overdoses. These needles are at our libraries, in our parks, children's play areas and near our businesses.

1310

We need to take action on the opioid epidemic in our city. I am thankful we have people like Fred ensuring our community is safe. However, more needs to be done to ensure people in our community are safe from harm. I hope this government will listen to the people, like Fred, and implement safe injection sites in Niagara.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT GOUVERNEMENT MUNICIPAL

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: One of the reasons that I am in this Legislature and I was motivated to run in 2003 was because we had a government in the Mike Harris government that did not respect local governance. So it pains me, Mr. Speaker, to rise today to express my con-

cern and the concern of many, many constituents of Don Valley West and beyond who have already contacted my office regarding the Ford government's perplexing last-minute scheme to meddle in Toronto's municipal election.

As our Liberal caucus has already stated publicly, this bizarre action on the part of Premier Ford creates chaos in Toronto and in Ontario. This erratic proposal to unilaterally cut Toronto city council in half jeopardizes Ontario's strong economic growth by sending the message to the world that Ontario is a risky place to do business.

This is a highly undemocratic proposal. It does not respect the process that the city of Toronto and the regions went through. It does not respect the people who have raised funds, who have paid out of pocket to campaign for election. There was no hint of this erratic action during the election campaign, and the Ford government has never asked the people of Toronto about this proposal. No matter what the Premier may say, travel and rallies are not the same as consultation.

Il est tout simplement irresponsable de procéder à des changements antidémocratiques à ce moment.

Whatever you believe about the ideal number of councillors for Toronto, Mr. Speaker, the way Premier Ford is treating Toronto is wrong. It is vindictive, mean and undemocratic, and it should stop.

FIERTÉ SIMCOE PRIDE

Mr. Doug Downey: I rise today to celebrate 18 flag raisings across Simcoe county that are happening over the next four days. These flag raisings are in support of Fierté Simcoe Pride, and there are proclamations from most municipalities in Simcoe county.

This is Fierté Simcoe Pride's seventh annual Pride across Simcoe county, which features various family-friendly, community-oriented events over the course of two weeks. The celebration of LGBTQ2+ community brings pride to communities big and small and has support from all 18 municipalities in the county as well as Canadian Forces Base Borden, Rama First Nation and Beausoleil First Nation.

This year features the first-ever two-spirit powwow, organized by the youth of Beaujolais First Nation, as well as the third annual Trans Pride March in Orillia and the fourth annual Simcoe County Pride Awards. The awards honour LGBTQ2+ individuals, allies and supportive organizations that are doing work to make it safer and more inclusive in Simcoe county. This work makes our communities better places to live, work and grow. Details of the awards can be found at www.simcoepride.com.

Minister Wilson, Minister Mulroney, Andrea Khanjin, Jill Dunlop and myself would like to wish them a fantastic two weeks of events. We also would like to congratulate the award winners that will be feted on August 11.

FIREFIGHTING IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. John Vanthof: As we are all aware, northern Ontario has been ravaged by forest fires in the last few

weeks. On behalf of the residents of Timiskaming—Cochrane and, I believe, all Ontarians, I would like to express our sincere condolences to the family of Jerry Gadwa, who lost his life fighting a fire in northwestern Ontario.

Firefighters and people who respond to emergencies are a special breed. They go to danger and they help the rest of us flee from it. To his family and to all the others who are fighting these fires to keep our families safe, our sincerest thanks and our sincerest condolences.

And, for a brief update, the Lady Evelyn fire has been held at, I believe, around 30,000 hectares. The Parry Sound fire, I believe, is the hot spot right now.

This is a very divisive place, but we give credit where credit is due. I would like to thank the MNR and the minister responsible for the work that they've done—there's been no effort spared—along with Emergency Measures Ontario and the firefighters and other workers from other provinces, from America and from Mexico. It has been a united effort, and I'd like to thank everyone. Please stay safe, everyone.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I am very excited to stand in the House to wish athletes from my riding of Barrie—Innisfil good luck as they leave to compete in the 2018 Special Olympics Canada National Summer Games in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. There are 260 athletes travelling from Ontario to compete in the games, making it the largest team attending.

I would like to personally congratulate Joey Eira, Kristy Alford and Nicholas Cunningham, who are competing in athletics; Emily MacTavish, who is competing in swimming; as well as Maryann Lewtas, who is competing in bocce. These athletes earned their place on the team through hard work, dedication, and their performance at the 2016 provincial spring games, which took place in Guelph. I want to inform the House that Kristy Alford holds the OFSAA record for the 100-metre as well as two gold medals from 2017.

I urge everyone in this House to go to specialolympicsontario.com to be able to follow their athletes from across Ontario. Good luck, team Ontario.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Mr. Dave Smith: I too am rising on Special Olympics Canada. For the next seven days, a number of athletes will be competing in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Ontario once again has a very strong contingent of exceptional athletes.

I would like to publicly acknowledge a number of those athletes who will be competing for Ontario from my riding: in the A division of soccer, Brandon VanSickle and Dylan Armstrong; in soccer, Nicole Hewitt, Brian Davis and Candace Bushie.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge one particular athlete who has distinguished herself in a number of

disciplines. This is her second Canada games that she will be attending. Her name is Lisa Butler and she is competing in five events: the 400-metre, the 800-metre, the long jump, the javelin and the shotput. As I like to say, it is her own half-decathlon.

I would like to wish all of those athletes the best of luck in Nova Scotia. I'm sure they will represent us very, very well. And most importantly, I wish them a safe journey back home.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BETTER LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION DES ADMINISTRATIONS LOCALES

Mr. Clark moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 5, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006, the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 / *Projet de loi 5, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la cité de Toronto, la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités et la Loi de 1996 sur les élections municipales.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1319 to 1324.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Will the members please take their seats.

Mr. Clark has moved that leave be given to introduce a bill entitled An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006, the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, and that it now be read for the first time.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hogarth, Christine	Parsa, Michael
Baber, Roman	Jones, Sylvia	Pettapiece, Randy
Babikian, Aris	Karahalios, Belinda	Phillips, Rod
Bailey, Robert	Ke, Vincent	Rasheed, Kaleed
Barrett, Toby	Khanjin, Andrea	Rickford, Greg
Bouma, Will	Kramp, Daryl	Roberts, Jeremy
Clark, Steve	Kusendova, Natalia	Romano, Ross
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Sabawy, Sheref
Crawford, Stephen	MacLeod, Lisa	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Martin, Robin	Simard, Amanda
Downey, Doug	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Dunlop, Jill	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Todd
Elliott, Christine	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Fedeli, Victor	McNaughton, Monte	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Fee, Amy	Miller, Norman	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Mulroney, Caroline	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Nicholls, Rick	Walker, Bill

Gill, Parm
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Mike

Oosterhoff, Sam
Pang, Billy
Park, Lindsey

Wilson, Jim
Yakubuski, John
Yurek, Jeff

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Andrew, Jill
Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arthur, Ian
Begum, Doly
Bell, Jessica
Berns-McGown, Rima
Bisson, Gilles
Burch, Jeff
Des Rosiers, Nathalie
Fife, Catherine
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Gélinas, France

Glover, Chris
Gretzky, Lisa
Harden, Joel
Hassan, Faisal
Hatfield, Percy
Horwath, Andrea
Hunter, Mitzie
Lalonde, Marie-France
Lindo, Laura Mae
Mamakwa, Sol
Mantha, Michael
Miller, Paul
Monteith-Farrell, Judith
Morrison, Suze

Rakocevic, Tom
Schreiner, Mike
Shaw, Sandy
Singh, Guratan
Singh, Sara
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Stiles, Marit
Tabuns, Peter
Vanthof, John
West, Jamie
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Yarde, Kevin

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 60; the nays are 40.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'd like to recognize the minister for a brief explanation of the bill.

Hon. Steve Clark: The Better Local Government Act amends the Municipal Act, the Municipal Elections Act and the City of Toronto Act to align the city of Toronto's municipal wards and the number of councillors with the number and configuration for the current 25 provincial and federal electoral districts. It extends the nomination period for councillor and school board trustee candidates in Toronto to September 14. The nomination deadline for the position of mayor of Toronto would remain unchanged. It reverses changes introduced in 2016 that mandate the election of new regional chairs in York, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka and return to the system that was in place prior to 2016. Other regional chair elections remain unchanged.

1330

POET LAUREATE OF ONTARIO ACT (IN MEMORY OF GORD DOWNIE), 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LE POÈTE OFFICIEL DE L'ONTARIO (À LA MÉMOIRE DE GORD DOWNIE)

Mr. Hatfield moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to establish the Poet Laureate of Ontario in memory of Gord Downie / Projet de loi 6, Loi visant à créer la charge de poète officiel de l'Ontario à la mémoire de Gord Downie.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Windsor–Tecumseh with a brief explanation of the bill.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: A very short synopsis: The members who were here before know that this isn't the first time this bill was introduced. It came this close the last time, and then we were prorogued for a day, which knocked it out of the ballpark.

Gord Downie was the lead singer of the Tragically Hip. We all are aware of the cross-Canada tour, watched by 11 million or 12 million people.

A Poet Laureate: Canada has one; other provinces have them. Many municipalities in Ontario have them, including my city of Windsor. I think it's appropriate and it's past overdue. I would anticipate and expect your support when we debate the bill in the future.

PETITIONS

CURRICULUM

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm proud to present a petition on behalf of my constituent Jacqueline McKenzie. It's entitled "Protecting Children: Forward, Not Backward, on Sex Ed."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the health and physical education curriculum empowers young people to make informed decisions about relationships and their bodies;

"Whereas gender-based violence, gender inequality, unintended pregnancies, 'sexting,' and HIV and other sexually transmitted infections ... pose serious risks to the safety and well-being of young people;

"Whereas one in three women and one in six men experience sexual violence in Canada, and a lack of age-appropriate education about sexual health and healthy relationships leaves children and youth vulnerable to exploitation;

"Whereas one in five parents reported their own child being a victim of cyberbullying; and

"Whereas Doug Ford and the Conservative government is dragging Ontario backward, requiring students to learn an outdated sex ed curriculum that excludes information about consent, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexting, cyberbullying and safe and healthy relationships;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Education to continue the use of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum in schools and move Ontario forward, not backward."

I'm very happy to support this petition. I'll be affixing my signature and asking page Emmanuel to table it with the Clerks.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: This petition was influenced and inspired by a number of business owners in my

riding during the campaign when I was organizing a series of conversations called the Carleton Conversations.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas employers are not able to make a fair assessment of an employee's suitability after only one week of work; and

"Whereas the legislation introduced by the previous government ... granted two paid emergency leave days to all new employees after only one week of work; and

"Whereas" this bill "forces employers to pay for two emergency leave days to a potentially unsuitable employee; and

"Whereas many employers, the majority of whom are small business owners or operate family-run businesses, are now facing greater financial risk and cost, especially for those employers hiring part-time employees; and

"Whereas it is recognized and understood that there are situations where a new employee may require emergency leave during their probationary period;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To re-evaluate the mandatory paid benefit requirements to employees that work less days per week in order to ensure that paid benefits are fair to both employees and employers; to change the time period for entitled paid emergency leave days to three months after an employee's first day of employment, and instead grant two unpaid emergency leave days to all new employees within the probationary period as outlined in their respective employment contracts."

I fully endorse this petition and will be affixing my signature to it.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Jessica Bell: This petition is to stop Doug Ford from interfering in municipal elections.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Doug Ford's decision to reduce Toronto's wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

"Whereas Doug Ford's meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

"Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford's unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford's political gain."

I support this petition and I will be affixing my signature to it.

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICY

Mr. Billy Pang: This is from a group of constituents from my riding.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there has been an unprecedented number of illegal border crossers who have entered our country;

"Whereas the federal government is shirking its responsibility to handle the costs of providing social assistance to those illegal border crossers, even though the majority of them will be eventually deported when their claims are rejected by the Immigration and Refugee Board;

"Whereas the Premier and the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services have shown strong leadership by standing up for the financial viability of Ontario and" responsibility "of Canada's immigration system;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"—continue the work that the government is doing to stand up for Ontario's taxpayers by demanding that the federal government pay its bills;

"—take steps to stop the flow of illegal border crossers to Ontario;

"—condemn the practice of illegal border crossing, and thank the provincial government including, notably, the Premier and the minister for their amazing work to manage this crisis."

I fully endorse this petition and affix my signature on it.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Suze Morrison: I would like to table a petition entitled "Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Doug Ford's decision to reduce Toronto's wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

"Whereas Doug Ford's meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

"Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford's unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford's political gain."

I fully endorse this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and providing it to page Emmanuel to deliver to the Clerks.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I have a petition entitled "Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.

"Whereas Doug Ford's decision to reduce Toronto's wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

"Whereas Doug Ford's meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

"Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford's unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford's political gain."

I'm supporting this petition, affixing my signature and will be giving it to page Eric.

1340

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Jill Andrew: I am proud to present this petition on behalf of our community: "Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Doug Ford's decision to reduce Toronto's wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

"Whereas Doug Ford's meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

"Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford's unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford's political gain."

I proudly support this and will be signing my signature and passing it over to page Emmanuel.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: This petition is to stop Doug Ford from interfering in municipal elections.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Doug Ford's decision to reduce Toronto's wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

"Whereas Doug Ford's meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

"Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford's unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the

existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford's political gain."

I completely endorse this petition and will be affixing my signature to it and passing it to page Hannah to deliver to the Clerk.

CURRICULUM

Mr. Kevin Yarde: "Protecting Children: Forward, Not Backward, on Sex Ed.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the health and physical education curriculum empowers young people to make informed decisions about relationships and their bodies;

"Whereas gender-based violence, gender inequality, unintended pregnancies, 'sexting,' and HIV and other sexually transmitted infections ... pose serious risks to the safety and well-being of young people;

"Whereas one in three women and one in six men experience sexual violence in Canada, and a lack of age-appropriate education about sexual health and healthy relationships leaves children and youth vulnerable to exploitation;

"Whereas one in five parents reported their own child being a victim of cyberbullying; and

"Whereas Doug Ford and the Conservative government is dragging Ontario backward, requiring students to learn an outdated sex ed curriculum that excludes information about consent, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexting, cyberbullying and safe and healthy relationships;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Education to continue the use of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum in schools and move Ontario forward, not backward."

I fully endorse this. I will be signing it and handing it over to page Emmanuel.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

M^{me} France Gélinas: My petition is called "Stop the Cuts to Indigenous Reconciliation.

"Whereas Ontario is situated on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, many of whom have been on this land since time immemorial;

"Whereas in 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report: 'Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future' which made 94 recommendations or 'Calls to Action' for the government of Canada;

"Whereas reconciliation must be at the centre of all government decision-making;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario" as follows:

“—continue reconciliation work in Ontario by implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

“—reinstate the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation;

“—work with First Nations leaders to sign co-operative, government-to-government accords;

“—support TRC education and community development (e.g. TRC summer writing sessions);

“—support Indigenous communities across the province (e.g. cleaning up Grassy Narrows).”

I fully support this petition and will affix my name to it and ask page Eric to bring it to the Clerk.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Doly Begum: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I will be affixing my signature to it and handing it to page Hannah.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Sandy Shaw: “Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I fully support this petition and I will affix my name.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

POLITIQUES DU GOUVERNEMENT

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Resuming the debate adjourned on July 26, 2018, on the motion regarding government priorities.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci, monsieur le Président. Encore une fois, félicitations pour votre élection.

Il me fait un grand plaisir de partager avec vous. Je sais qu’on parle, chacun de nous, de ce qu’on a vécu durant la campagne. Donc, avec votre indulgence, cher Président, j’aimerais remercier les gens d’Orléans pour m’avoir réélue pour pouvoir les représenter ici, à Queen’s Park, pour cette 42^e législature, cette première session que nous vivons cet été tous ensemble.

I would like to congratulate all of the elected officials who are in this House, 124 of us, who will be sharing the next four years with respect, I hope, and good debate.

And, Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker, actually; congratulations on your nomination.

Certainly, for me, I also want to take the time to say thank you. Merci à toute l’équipe de la campagne and to all of the individuals who helped me during my campaign. This was my second time. I had the privilege of being elected in 2014. This 2018 campaign brought forward, I would say, hundreds of people coming together in Orléans to ensure that I would come back to this Legislature. So to the people of Orléans but also to my campaign team and all of the wonderful volunteers: Merci. Merci beaucoup.

Madam Speaker, we’ve been talking about many, many things in the past few weeks sitting in this Legislature. This is my first time reflecting on some of the government bills that are coming to the House that have passed or that are being introduced. Certainly, I wouldn’t be myself if I was not going to talk about the cap-and-trade system that has been cancelled.

1350

In 2014 and thereafter, I had the privilege of going to schools, visiting schools in the riding of Orléans. You talk to the future: the people, the young minds who may be here someday helping us make decisions. What those young minds are asking us, every single time that I meet them in classrooms, is, “What’s your plan for climate change? What’s your plan on the environment?” And I had a plan; we had a plan in Ontario, a cap-and-trade system that was there to ensure that the polluter would pay. We would ensure that the sky, the water and everything around us is better. They were glad to hear this, Madam Speaker, I have to say. They were indeed very happy to see that we were taking action.

This government made a decision during the campaign, and they did follow through, cancelling that. But at what cost? What is the cost associated with the cancellation of a cap-and-trade system? What is the message

that this government is sending, not only to the wonderful young people who one day will be voting but also to our Canadian partners, our international partners?

I have to say that I was a little bit shocked. Last week, I believe, I was reading an article in the *Globe and Mail*. There was the ambassador of Germany to Canada who was making reference to this. It was sad. It was actually quite sad for me to hear that coming from an international leader, someone apolitical, sharing with us their thoughts. I will quote here. She warned that, "Ontario's move to cancel" contracts "represents a black mark for the province in the eyes of foreign investors.." That really spoke to me, because when we hear on the other side of the House a government that says that they're open for business, that they're there for the people, I hope they take the time to go to school and meet with the future of Ontario's best.

You ask them about what matters to them, and you know what they say? The environment, climate change, the fact that it is costly, climate change today. Municipalities are suffering for many, many things that are happening that are outside of the control of this Legislature. And we're paying for those events. So I want to reflect on what message we're sending to those young minds. What is this government sending to those young individuals? As I said, I hope that they have the privilege to go to those schools and actually engage and share what their plan is, because I don't think that at this point we really understand what the plan is, other than cancelling a cap-and-trade system that was helping the environment.

Madam Speaker, I also want to talk to you today about when this decision was made—a little bit before. This government, the Premier-elect at the time, said, "Well, we're going to move forward in cancelling some initiatives" that were helping businesses, individuals, seniors in their house renovations, businesses also thriving, selling electric vehicles. I'm very proud to say that in Orléans we have a wonderful dealer who has been very proud to be the number-one sales retailer dealership selling electric vehicles. That was because of some of the incentives from the revenue generated from the cap-and-trade system, going into a program called GreenON.

Not only this program cancelled, but I think in my first week in the constit office I received about 35 calls from residents of Orléans who are very concerned that they signed contracts for home renovations, upgrading their windows, helping them with the efficiencies within their electricity—and that was very important for them. They were told bluntly by this government, "It doesn't matter. We've made the decision. We promised, and we're going to keep our promise at whatever cost, and you're not going to get those rebates." That's what they say governing for the people is.

I don't have the exact number of people who were eligible to vote in 2018, but what I do know is that, sadly, a little bit over 40% did not exercise their right to vote—and I always encourage you, regardless of who you're going to vote for, to vote. Out of those about 60% who chose to vote, less than 40% actually voted for this new

government. Some 60% actually voted for other parties, including the Liberals, the NDP and the Greens.

So again, I ask this government: Who are they governing for? In my view, when you say that you're going to govern for everyone, you have to look at everyone who might not have voted for you and try to identify the areas where you can also help them. In Orléans, it was really hard for me to look at those families and say, "Well, I'm going to see what they can do." And it was very blunt: "I'm so sorry. We made a decision and this is it."

Let's talk about school repairs. I know the minister is going to say, "Oh, there is money for school repairs." Yes, but there was \$100 million earmarked for those school boards and those schools all across the province, where they would be able to help in renovating their schools, to help with their electricity and their footprint, to reduce their GHG emissions. That was actually a good thing happening—when you hear that the students in those schools are particularly interested in this. Let's tell those kids what this government just did.

Municipalities are going to be deeply affected, and actually, a lot of those municipalities are rural municipalities. When you look at the entire province, it's not just Toronto; it's Windsor, it's Perth, it's Thamesville, it's Hawkesbury, it's everywhere. That's another thing: Through the GreenON initiatives and the cap-and-trade system, there were a lot of initiatives that would have helped municipalities all across Ontario. Those are cancelled.

Let's talk about businesses. I'm a former business person, for those who don't know. I owned and operated a retirement residence. As a business, I liked to know what was going to happen next. You try to be predictable. From a business perspective, you have a business plan so that you know. Well, my understanding is that this government just made a decision to cancel a contract with very little notice to those individuals. For me, the rule of law—and I have a wonderful person who whispers every day the rules of law, and that is definitely not where I thought this government would start governing from.

There are a lot of things in the cap-and-trade bill that I'm very concerned about: cancelling of contracts; arbitrary decisions with no proper notification; businesses that had hired staff in good faith, knowing that there would be an incentive at the end of the day so they can increase their revenue from the GreenON initiative. There are lots of things to talk about. I am disappointed but not surprised about what's happening right now. I'm sad about this aspect: I thought that they would at least consult and look at the benefit of what was happening all across Ontario from this system that we just made an arbitrary decision, and a very partisan decision, to cancel.

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J'aimerais aussi, madame la Présidente, parler un petit peu en français. Écoutez, le discours du trône n'avait aucune adresse en français, ce qui était vraiment pour moi un désappointement.

Depuis, je sais qu'un des membres du gouvernement a demandé à la ministre déléguée aux Affaires

francophones une question, et elle était très vague dans la perspective de ce qu'ils vont faire pour la francophonie en Ontario. Écoutez, depuis plusieurs années—et je dirais plusieurs années de belles initiatives qui ont fait leur chemin ici à l'Assemblée législative pour promouvoir la francophonie et pour aider à créer une province où les deux langues officielles soient respectées.

C'est intéressant de voir que la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones n'a pas pu, à ce moment—c'est encore tôt; on va voir ce qu'ils vont faire. Mais j'étais un petit peu irritée et un petit peu désappointée du fait qu'on n'avait pas parlé de l'OIF, l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. On est un membre au niveau international. On a pris cette décision pour démontrer à tous qu'on est fier de notre francophonie. Aussi, au niveau économique, madame la Présidente, c'est très important, l'OIF, parce que ça peut amener des investissements et des partenariats très intéressants qui seraient à développer. Pour moi, et pour nous, je pense que c'était un aspect important, et ils n'en ont fait aucune référence depuis le début de cette 42^e législature. Donc, je pose des questions à ce gouvernement. Qu'est-ce qui arrive avec l'OIF?

L'autre aspect, aussi, c'est la Loi sur les services en français. Écoutez, on parle de donner des services en français, d'aider et de développer—je pense que c'est ce que la ministre déléguée nous disait, qu'elle va faire certain que le gouvernement livre les services en français. Écoutez, la province est grande, le gouvernement est grand, mais il y a aussi plusieurs entités qui ont besoin de soutiens. La Loi sur les services en français peut être un très, très bon moyen pour aider encore une fois à faire bonifier la langue française à travers l'Ontario.

Aussi, on n'a pas encore parlé du Programme d'appui à la francophonie ontarienne. C'est un programme, madame la Présidente, qui s'appelle le PAFO. Le PAFO, c'est un million de dollars désignés pour les communautés et les organismes francophones, et ce programme aidait à démontrer l'engagement à la francophonie, de soutenir la francophonie de façon locale—les radios, les petits organismes. C'était quelque chose, vraiment, qui avait été très, très bien accueilli. J'espère que ce nouveau gouvernement ne fera pas des décisions à l'aveuglette, et qu'ils vont prendre le temps et qu'ils vont renouveler la troisième année du programme PAFO, qui est très important à travers la francophonie ontarienne.

Un aspect, aussi, dont on ne parle pas depuis quelque temps—on parle beaucoup d'immigration, mais on ne parle pas de la francophonie. L'immigration francophone, on a une cible de 5 %. On n'a rien entendu, en ce moment, du côté du gouvernement, de leur engagement profond d'atteindre cette cible de 5 % de francophones. C'est certain que pour l'atteindre, on doit travailler en partenariat avec le fédéral, et je vous dirais que dernièrement, les liens entre le fédéral et la province sont un petit peu froids—

Une voix: Tendus.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Ou tendus, exactement. Donc, j'espère que le gouvernement va ouvrir ses oreilles

et va vraiment rejoindre cette cible. Pour ça, ils doivent travailler en partenariat avec le fédéral et aussi les municipalités.

Je sais que, bon, on était tous fiers en Ontario lorsque le nouveau gouvernement a donné son appui à l'Université de l'Ontario français. J'aimerais juste réitérer que l'Université de l'Ontario français avait été créée par une loi qui a été adoptée en décembre de l'année dernière, et en avril son premier conseil des gouverneurs avait été appointé et nommé. Donc je suis fière qu'ils ne l'aient pas coupé. Je peux dire que c'est plus le fait qu'ils auraient pu couper—le fait qu'on aura l'Université de l'Ontario français.

Donc je vais tenir compte de ce dossier. Nous allons vraiment suivre ce dossier de façon très particulière, parce que c'est important d'avoir un environnement où les jeunes du secondaire vont pouvoir poursuivre leurs études ici, dans la région de Toronto, dans un univers francophone. Donc c'est certain que pour moi, ce sont des choses importantes, et j'ai hâte d'entendre l'engagement profond de ce nouveau gouvernement pour la francophonie de l'Ontario, parce qu'il y a eu quand même de belles réalisations dans les dernières années. Ça serait vraiment triste, madame la Présidente, qu'on prenne des décisions irrationnelles, comme on voit en ce moment, pour les francophones de l'Ontario.

Il me reste une minute et quelques secondes. Je vais terminer encore une fois en disant que durant une campagne électorale, c'est facile de faire des promesses. It's always easy during a campaign to promise everything, and that's what we've heard. But I urge this government to stop campaigning and start governing. Being part of a government means that you need to consult. You need to think. You need to look and engage with every single Ontarian. We haven't seen that much coming from the government at this time, so I encourage the government to maybe take a pause on certain decisions and to continue on la francophonie; lots of great things have happened and we haven't heard any strong commitment coming from that side.

Encore une fois, madame la Présidente, I want to say congratulations to you. I know I started with the Speaker, and the Deputy Speaker is here at this point. Madame la Présidente, congratulations. It's wonderful to see you sitting in this chair. All the very best. Merci beaucoup.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to start my inaugural speech by congratulating you, and also all of my fellow MPPs, both new and returning, on all sides of the House. I look forward to working with each one of you. We all have the incredible honour and duty of bringing the voices of our constituents to this place and to the attention of our colleagues, as I hope to do today.

Words cannot describe the honour that I feel to rise here in this House to represent the people of my riding and to play some small part in the making of Ontario's history. In fact, I am a Conservative largely because of

history—maybe because of the French Revolution. At least that was the thing that I studied that made it twig for me.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Hold it a second. Robespierre? Is that what you're comparing yourself to?

Mrs. Robin Martin: No.

The French Revolution teaches us that freedom without restraints leads to anarchy, and utopian dreams like you often hear from the other side of the House often lead to terror or violence. So, following Edmund Burke, I personally have a disposition to preserve, to respect and to study what is best in our culture, while acknowledging, of course, that there are always areas we can and should improve.

I studied history and political science—and political philosophy, really—at McGill, the university in Montreal, with the great Canadian political philosopher Charles Taylor. Some of you may have heard of him. I think he actually ran for the NDP in Westmount in 1968 against a guy whose name was Pierre Trudeau. But he's a brilliant philosopher, and unfortunately most Canadians haven't heard of him, but he has a lot to offer and I recommend all of his books. They're a little dense but well worth the read.

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Charles Taylor was a great influence on me. We read together, for my master's thesis, a lot of books—a lot of books in French, actually. We read de Tocqueville; we read Montesquieu's *l'Esprit des lois*; we read Benjamin Constant on the Liberty of Ancients Compared with That of Moderns. Really, freedom was the focus of my thesis. But what is freedom? Freedom clearly isn't just doing what you want. That isn't what freedom is; that's anarchy.

Freedom, in my view, is ordered liberty. In my view, each of us is a link in a historical chain of democratic obligation—past, present and future. Although the individual may be the basic political unit, the family is the basic social unit. I believe that we find our personal freedom by assuming the burden of our natural, inherited and freely chosen obligations and duties—those ones we take on because we want to. We get married. We have children. And we take on those obligations willingly because they make our lives more fulfilling. In fact, you could say they make us more free.

I believe that it is this felt obligation to pursue the good and the well-being of future generations, which is the very thing that can make us heroically devoted to purposes beyond ourselves, even beyond our own families, to the flourishing of our community, our province and our country.

I got into politics because I'm worried about the direction that our culture is going, with our very extreme emphasis on rights—that's all we talk about: the rights that we have—and we have little or no discussion about our duties and responsibilities. In fact, people can be seen sometimes trying to evade those: trying to hide from paying taxes; not wanting to serve in our military; really trying to shirk some of our responsibilities.

I think we're losing our compass. I think we're actually losing what makes us happy, which is those duties and obligations that we freely take on. Sometimes—and I think this was particularly true under the last government in the last 15 years—it seems that we're descending into democratic gluttony, if you will, or doctrinaire selfishness.

One example is near at hand, and that is our debt. All government debt is deferred taxation. Someone has to pay it. And it's being downloaded onto the backs of our children, who cannot defend themselves against our democratically produced gluttony. They don't get a voice. We have to be their voice—our future generations, our children. We're making these decisions and putting the debt on them. That, I think, is the wrong direction.

As I said before, it's an honour for me to rise in this House and to represent the people of my riding. I want to thank those people again for the honour and privilege of serving them. My riding is the riding of Eglinton—Lawrence. I really would not be here today without the help of many people.

I would like to just take a moment to mention a few of them: first of all, my very supportive family, including my husband, who is here today and who I introduced earlier—it's not a secret that we were high school sweethearts, so he's in for the long haul, as it were, but I won't call him long-suffering because it's great to be my husband, obviously; sometimes he suffers—our two grown children, Erik and Alexandra; and my parents, who unfortunately are no longer living but were certain that I would be elected someday; and also my husband's parents, who are like my parents as well.

I was very blessed to have a window into politics at a very early age. My best friend, Jennifer Kaplan, was the daughter of former Solicitor General Robert Kaplan; and my husband's father, Joseph Martin, was the executive assistant to the then Premier of Manitoba, Duff Roblin, back in the day. Those two role models made sure that I caught the political bug early, and they encouraged me.

But my election is the result of many people working hard for many years during many elections and in between those elections. In this campaign, I had a very dedicated team of volunteers, under the leadership of Mitch Wexler, Clare Schulte-Albert, Corey Michaels and Bernadine Morris. And I'd just like to particularly recognize Bob Amaron, Juri Otsason, Richard Tattersall and Katarina Glozic, who never stopped helping through at least two election cycles. One incredible volunteer—you all want one like this—Juri Otsason, canvassed virtually every day for over a year, for more than one election.

I also want to extend my sincere thanks to my campaign co-chairs: former finance minister Joe Oliver; former Senator Consiglio Di Nino; the late Senator Jun Enverga, who was Canada's first Filipino senator; and Senator Linda Frum.

It took a long time and a lot of effort to get here, and I pledge to use every ounce of my energy to shape a positive future for this great province and for its people.

I am the first Progressive Conservative to be elected to the Ontario Legislature in the riding of Eglinton–Lawrence, which came into existence some 19 years ago.

My predecessor, Mike Colle, held the riding for all of that time and, as his many years of service attest, served the constituency ably. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Colle for his years of service to the community.

In case you don't know, Eglinton–Lawrence is in the middle of the city of Toronto, just about five kilometres from Queen's Park, so I encourage all members to come and visit. I'd be happy to show you around. The riding includes a number of important landmarks, including the Columbus Centre, which is the cultural hub for Toronto's Italian Canadian community, and Baycrest Health Sciences, which is a unique research and teaching hospital, with a special focus on brain health and aging.

The eastern part of our riding was settled in the early 1900s and was at that time the northern tip of the old city of Toronto. The western part of the riding was settled mostly by Italian, Portuguese and Jewish immigrants after the Second World War. More recently, the riding has benefited from a burgeoning Filipino population and a host of immigrants from various other backgrounds. It's a diverse and vibrant community which I think of as a microcosm of the city of Toronto.

I have been knocking on doors in all parts of my riding over some 20 years in elections for all levels of government, so believe me when I tell you that I have met the people and I have listened to those people and I have heard those people. They've told me about their concerns and challenges, and I heard those concerns becoming ever more urgent over the past few years. In this recent election, I canvassed every day for over a year. I have a vivid recollection of some of the people that I spoke with and the concerns they shared, and I want to share some of them with you today.

Many people that I spoke with were looking for work and currently unemployed or underemployed, including a very frustrated resident of Albanian background who had a young family and a pregnant wife and who could not find work to support them. In fact, many of the people that I spoke with wondered why the government was making it so hard to work. Recent immigrants told me they came to Ontario for a better life and were very disappointed to discover that good jobs were so difficult to find.

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Small business owners that I spoke with expressed similar concerns. One wanted to hire 10 young people into good jobs but was unable to do so because of regulations. Another was getting out of a business that he had been in for years and, as a result, had to lay off his two long-term, skilled and trusted employees, simply because regulatory hurdles had effectively made the business, in his words, "not worth it anymore."

Under the previous government, it almost seemed as if Ontario was closed for business. If there was a going concern, they would tax it. If it carried on, they would

regulate it. When the poor business owner finally threw up her arms in despair and gave up, the government just might come along and subsidize it, or subsidize a competitor.

Stories like these make me glad that our new government is taking steps to reduce the size and cost of government and is making creating and protecting jobs a priority. Many of the struggles people are facing can be resolved or at least made better if people can find a decent job to support themselves and their families. The people I have spoken with recently are genuinely relieved to have a province which is open for business again, and a government which supports businesses and entrepreneurs by lowering taxes and reducing the regulatory burden.

Other people I spoke with during the election expressed frustration with the mounting bills and expenses that they were facing. Many of the people facing the worst challenges are those on a fixed income, such as pensioners or those just starting out, both as young adults on their own for the first time ever or as immigrants trying to build a new life.

One older lady from the Caribbean started to cry as she explained to me that she could not afford to stay in her house and pay her hydro bill, despite cutting her electricity usage to the bare essentials. Another older woman from an eastern European background was in tears because she was going to lose her home even though she had unplugged her refrigerator and did not put up her Christmas lights that year. A young man who required a pickup truck for his job told me that he would line up endlessly at Costco just to save a few cents on a litre of gasoline because he couldn't balance his budget and was afraid that he was going to default on his rent and lose his apartment.

I am thinking of these people and others when I say how proud I am to be part of a government that has already taken steps to reduce gas prices, scrap cap-and-trade and oppose other carbon tax schemes, and lower hydro bills. You can almost hear a collective sigh of relief across Ontario.

Then there are those others who are relying on our public services, who have been holding on for years hoping that things would get better but who never seemed to benefit from all of the previous government's spending. I spoke with numerous people who have simply waited too long to access basic health services. I also heard from more than a few aging parents who worry about how their now-mature but dependent children with developmental disabilities or autism or brain injuries will manage when they are gone. I met a Filipino mother of two teenage boys with severe autism who can barely cope with the daily demands on her. There are many, many other examples.

I'm proud to be part of a government that will take action to address many challenges through our commitment to ending hallway health care, through special funding for autism and through our historic commitment to mental health. I'm particularly looking forward to work-

ing on improving access to those services in my role as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, and to offering suggestions on autism in my role as an MPP and mother of a child on the spectrum.

Ordinary people recognize that the biggest threat to Ontario's public services is unsustainable spending. Some I spoke with at the doors were bewildered by the last government's spending spree. These were Liberals, but they said to me, "When is it going to stop?" and they shook their heads in despair. I'm delighted that our government is already taking steps to restore faith in Ontario's public institutions. Putting Ontario on a healthy financial footing will ensure that we can maintain and strengthen our hospitals, our schools and other vital public services.

Unfortunately, my riding has also been impacted by the scourge of gun and gang violence. On July 8, I went to an annual community walk for hope and peace to end gun violence. The walk was started a few years ago by friends of a beloved teacher who was caught in the crossfire and killed because he happened to be outside at the wrong moment. I am glad that our government is prioritizing community safety and that it will ensure our police services have the resources, tools and supports they need to enforce the law and protect innocent people and families from violence.

I am excited about the opportunity we have here to help create a better future for the people I have spoken of today, for others in my riding and, more broadly, for the people of Ontario. This will be a government for the people—which, after all, is what a democracy should be. I strongly support the approach that we have taken as a government, which looks beyond what divides us—our race, our religion, our language, our sexual orientation, our region—and instead is focusing on what unites us, because I believe there is strength in that unity, and I believe that is a better approach. After all, we all want the same things: a better job, a better life. We want our families to have the things they need to succeed, our children to have what they need to succeed. That, I think, is a better focus: strength in unity, because, together, everything is possible. Together, I believe we can overcome the challenges that face us, and together, I believe we can make life better for the people of Ontario.

So let's all, together, roll up our sleeves and get to work for the people.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, I think I've already congratulated you on your ascendancy to the chair once before, but if I didn't, I would be remiss and I want to do it again.

This is an opportunity to have a pretty wide-ranging speech, given what this motion reads, which is, "We're the government. We're great and we do all things wonderful." This will be an opportunity for me to speak about all of those things.

I just want to start on a couple of points.

First of all, I'm going to start on something that's been bothering a lot of us in this Legislature and a lot of

people in this province for a while, given the Trumpish type of approach to the way we treat immigrants to this country and refugees. It's starting to permeate across this side of the border.

When we hear people start talking about illegal border crossers, first of all, it's not factual, and number two, it's quite divisive. I want to remind members of this House, as we listen to the speeches of members who just got elected here talk about how they got to the Legislature, that there's a great number of members in this assembly on both sides of the House, on the government side and on the opposition side of the House, who came here as refugees, who were essentially asylum seekers, who came here because of persecution, either financial, political or whatever it might have been, in their own countries. They decided to make a life for themselves by leaving that country because life for their families was unbearable, and they chose Canada as the country to come to. As a result of that, their families were raised here in this country. They got into this country, many of them, by way of refugee status, many of them as sponsors who never—I'll get to the sponsor thing in a minute, but many of them as refugees who came here and went through the process of having to wait from six months to a year and a half to be processed, to find out if their claim was able to be substantiated. Those people came to our country, eventually were approved to become citizens, became useful members of our society, contributed to our society, and some of them, my Lord, got elected and came to this Legislature.

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When we talk about asylum seekers as illegal border crossers, it flies in the face of what Canadianism is all about. We're a country that has laws and has due process of law. Anybody who crosses the border, one way or another, has to go through a process, through the federal government, through immigration, in order to be vetted. We don't grab people and throw them back out of the country just because they happen to get here by way of seeking refugee status or coming as asylum seekers.

Do we remember what we did to boatloads of Jews in the lead-up to the Second World War? Canada did that. We had entire boatloads of people from Germany who were being persecuted by the Nazis. Some of the Jewish people of Germany wanted out and got onto ships and came to Canada. And what did we do? We threw them out. Many of those people ended up in the death camps of Germany as a result of that decision. This Legislature and our people in this country could never stand for that again.

We need to respect the process.

There are people who don't have it as good as we do in the nations that they come from, and they decide to move to Canada for a different life for their families.

I come from Timmins, a part of northern Ontario where we're all immigrants. There was hardly anybody, except for First Nations, who lived up in Timmins, who worked on the mines or in the bush, who were not refugees, asylum seekers or immigrants to this country.

That's how we populated the workplaces of mining, forestry and all the other jobs. And do you know what happened? Most of you would know, because we come from those families. They came here sponsored by somebody. They got off the boat, and they never kept the condition of their sponsorship. Many of the people who live in my community, and who live in yours, did not meet the conditions of sponsorship and came in by the back door. Eventually, they got work, they raised families, they had kids here, and the country said, "Well, they're upstanding citizens who are giving to this great nation of Canada." We gave them citizenship.

So we forget how people got into this country and how they get into this country today.

When I hear petitions being read in this House and I hear people get up in this House and talk about illegal border crossers, it makes my blood boil, because I understand that there's due process of law. If somebody wants to come to Canada, they have to go through that due process. They either apply to be an immigrant, which is a very long process—you don't get into Canada very easily—or if they come here as asylum seekers or refugees, there's a process they have to go through. They are screened. They are investigated. We find out if there is anything in their background that would make them not be good citizens of this country. And the vast majority do stay because—do you know why they're here? They're here because they're leaving oppression in their own countries, either political oppression, physical oppression or economic oppression.

This is the part that people need to stop and think about: Some 85% of refugees coming into this country—or asylum seekers or whatever you want to call them—come from five countries. Maybe the problem is in those five countries—places like Syria, places like Haiti, and the list goes on. Maybe the issue is over there. Maybe those countries are not exactly friendly to those citizens and they come here for the reasons that our forefathers came to this country.

There's not one member in this House except one who can count themselves to be a true Canadian, as far as somebody who has been here all the time. We are all immigrants. Sol Mamakwa is the only one who can stand here and say, "I didn't emigrate here."

I was joking with Sol the other day. There's a great line by Chief Dan George from Alberta, who said years ago, "The only problem with my forefathers is that we had a very weak immigration policy." Imagine if they would have applied to us what we're applying to them. Most of us wouldn't have gotten here.

I just wanted to put that on the record.

I want to get on to this whole notion of what's going on in this bill that the government introduced today, where they're going to, essentially, reduce the size of council. There are two points I want to make. The first point is, the Premier stands here and says that this is going to make government more efficient. I'll tell you what it's going to do: We're going to have a very small council of 25 people, which means to say that 13 people

will have the power to make all the decisions in the city of Toronto. Thirteen people will have more power than individual cabinet ministers of this House. They will be able to approve whatever they want to approve when it comes to applications in order to get things built and done within the city as far as the zoning laws, as far as what's acceptable and what's not acceptable to build. What you're going to have is 13 people—because you don't need 25 people to pass something in a council of 25; you only need 13. Those 13 are going to have the power to essentially approve almost anything.

This is all going to be about politics by the back door. This is not about helping make things more efficient; this is about the rich getting richer. And for the people who get to council, because there will be larger constituencies, it's a lot more expensive to be able to get elected in those. It's going to be about the radical right controlling council in order to approve the deals that they want. It has nothing to do with democracy. It has nothing to do with saving money. This is all about making sure you guys can control what goes on in the city of Toronto.

I just want to remind you of something. Toronto: the number one city in North America. Why? Because we have a council and we have a city that do some pretty darn good things. We have a diverse city made up of people from across the world. We have a municipal council, now with 45 people, who gather to sit down and figure out how to make the city greater and greater every day.

For the Premier to say that it's not efficient and there's never been any kind of infrastructure ever built in this city because there's gridlock in the city of Toronto—hogwash. This is the best city in North America, and you guys should be proud of that. For you to say otherwise is disrespectful to the people in the city and the fine work that previous administrations have done at the city council of Toronto.

The other thing I want to say very quickly is that there was one foray from a provincial government, once upon a time—another Conservative government, by the name of Mike Harris, that decided to meddle in city politics. What they did is they amalgamated all the towns and cities around Toronto and made one big megacity. They also did it in Hamilton, they did it in Ottawa, and I think they did it in Sudbury as well. Do you know what the outcome was? We didn't save any money. It cost us more money, because now we had bureaucrats who had longer titles and more power and bigger budgets. We now spend more money per resident when it comes to administering services in those cities than we did before amalgamation. And guess what? It's much less representative of the people than it was before.

Do you know what the cost was? People lost the ability to get access to their elected councillors in cities like York, cities like Toronto and others. But the thing is that at the end, the Toronto members that were elected from the Conservative Party all got thrown out of office, because the people of Toronto said, "This is a really bad idea." The Tories were shut out of Toronto electoral

politics at the provincial level for at least three or four elections.

And now you do this? There is going to be a cost. I would be very careful, if I was a Toronto member—as I saw today on the government side—to get up and be a champion of this.

You think this is good politics: “Oh, fewer politicians—who the heck wants a politician? They just happen to get in the way.” Well that’s how King John felt and that’s how King Richard felt—you know, some of the bad kings we’ve had in England? They wanted to do things their own way. They thought, “Boy, if I can just do what I want, everything would be greater.”

The reason that the people—did you ever read about the Peasants’ Revolt? I don’t remember the member’s riding, but she was talking about the French Revolution. The real first revolution in parliamentary democracy as we know it today was actually in England—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Eglinton—Lawrence.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Eglinton—Lawrence—back in the 1340s, if I remember correctly. It was called the Peasants’ Revolt. The Peasants’ Revolt was all about the peasants—that’s “we, the people,” that’s all the working-class people—

Mrs. Robin Martin: And that’s you.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —who marched up against the king, at that time King Richard II, I believe, the young boy king. He was 14 years old. Was it Richard II? I can’t remember: II or III.

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I’m a peasant, and I’m proud to be a peasant—very proud to be a peasant. I stand with working people, and I stand there square. I don’t have a problem with that.

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My point is, the people back then, who were referred to as “peasants,” because that’s how they were referred to at that time, decided that it was a bad idea for the king to have all of the power so that the king could say you were owned by the lord of the manor who owned the property that you happened to live on, that you had to share whatever you got out of your local garden, the local piece of land that you got in order to sustain your family—you had to share it with the person who owned the land. It was serfdom. It was the Peasants’ Revolt that turned that around.

What is really fascinating, if we take the time to read—I know my friend across the way is interested in history, the member from Eglinton—Lawrence—is that we developed, over a period of 700 or 800 years, a thing called parliamentary democracy. The whole idea was to limit the power of the king or the queen. Don’t allow one unelected, I will say, hereditary person—and I have great respect for our queen; don’t take wrong what I’m saying. Queen Elizabeth II has served us wonderfully over the years that she’s been on the throne. But the point is that the people decided that it was a good idea to have a House of Commons that would put limits on what the

king or queen should do, so that the people had a say. That’s what the House of Commons is all about.

For the government here to stand and say, “We can rid of elected politicians,” and somehow that’s the best thing, throws us right back into the Middle Ages and the Dark Ages, when we didn’t have elected people. It was a hereditary king, it was hereditary peers and it was the landowners who controlled everything. And we, the peasants, had to take whatever crumbs they shook down from up above.

So when I hear the Premier talk about, “Oh, having less politicians is good,” it flies in the face of what historical reality is. The reason we elect people in our democracy is so that people can have a say. The great thing about our jobs is that every four years, if they don’t like what we’ve done, they get to throw us out. That’s the way it should be, right? So for the government to stand there and say, “Less politicians is good” is completely false. First of all, infrastructure has and continues to be built in the city of Toronto. They built subways before you came along. They built buildings. They repaired streets. They built freeways. They’ve done all kinds of things, this city, and they managed to do it as a city council of 45-plus. Before that it was much more than that, because we had local municipalities.

To argue that you’re going back and reducing the size of council is going to make it more efficient—all you’re doing is making it that much easier for the big developers to influence the 13 politicians they’re going to need to pass whatever they want at city hall. This is all about giving an elite few right-wing politicians the ability to do development as they choose. What you need on a municipal council, like you do in this Legislature, is a mix of people who don’t see things the same way, who may be left and who may be right. Having left and right politics in the chamber a good thing. But in the end—

Interjection: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, the member says that no, it’s not a good thing. That’s fair; that’s your view. We should go back to serfdom; I guess that’s where you want to bring us.

But the point is, having a council of, now, 47, if this legislation doesn’t pass, means to say that there’s full debate. It means to say that the public can have their say and the public can access the elected officials in order to try to influence the outcome. So I just say to the friends on the other side: This is a step backwards to where we don’t need to go.

The other thing I just want to say, with the little bit of time I’ve got left, is that it’s interesting that on the sex ed curriculum this government is saying something that nobody is really in favour of, except for a few social Conservatives—to turn the clock back to the 1990s—and that they’re going to do the biggest consultation in the world. The first piece of legislation that they brought into this House was legislation to allow them to break contracts, remove the right to sue from those companies that had their contracts broken by the provincial government and then put in the legislation that the government

has a right to misrepresent the facts when it comes to a prospectus before the Ontario Securities Commission. And there was no consultation. You went from second reading to third—zero to 60 in two seconds.

Madam Speaker, I might be wrong, but I think that there seems to be a pattern going on here: that when it comes to the legislation that we're going to debate on cap-and-trade and the legislation that we're now going to be debating on the reduction of the amount of elected officials in the city of Toronto, I think that there probably won't be any committee. If there is, it will be a day or two, and boom, it will be done. The public will not have its say, and I think that's rather sad and duplicitous, that the government—

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, it is duplicitous.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I will remind the member from Timmins that we speak in parliamentary terms. I will ask him to withdraw.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Very good, Madam Speaker. I withdraw.

The point is that it is certainly interesting that the government chooses to consult on an issue that they feel it would be good for them to consult on—I think that at the end it'll backfire, but that's a whole other story—but on issues that really matter, they won't consult the public. I think that is not only passing strange; it's pretty darn undemocratic.

With that, Madam Speaker, I just wanted to put those thoughts on the record. I certainly hope that the government—oh, I was almost going to forget. There was a private member's bill that went through this place—actually, about four of them. Conservative members like Frank Klees—I don't remember what his riding name was—brought forward a bill in order to elect the chairs of those cities, and there was also one that stood, I think, in the name of Mr. Ballard in the last Parliament, where, again, they wanted to have elected chairs and not appointed chairs for Mississauga, Peel and all the other committees.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: He lost the election.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, he lost the election, but how do you explain that all your members always spoke in favour of that legislation, always voted in favour of that legislation—

Interjection: No, no.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, you did, actually. You voted for it. Go back and take a look at the record. You guys supported the idea of elected chairs, and now, all of a sudden, because everybody wants to be in the good graces of Doug Ford—and who knows how much he's bullying his own people? I don't know; I'm not at those meetings. But can you imagine that these same people who were in favour of elected chairs, who got up in this House and spoke in the House in favour of electing regional chairs—and the names are many from the Conservative benches, many who are still here today—all of a sudden flipped their mind? Could it be that on their way to a cabinet position they were somewhat affected by

being able to do what they thought the Premier did in order to get in cabinet or stay in cabinet?

I think there comes a time in politics—and this is why people, I think, are cynical of all of us—that you stand for what you believe in, and if that means to say that you stand against your party, so be it. Either don't vote or vote against, but don't vote in favour.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Before we resume debate, I will remind all members to address their remarks to and through the Chair. Also, if we could do our best to address members by their ridings and not their names.

Further debate? I recognize the member from Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Applause.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I appreciate the collegiality, and I know it's reciprocal from across the aisle.

I rise today to speak about Ontario's future and the role of government—all of us—in fixing what ails us. You see, the government can't do everything. Indeed, it can't do a lot of things in some cases, because the nanny state doesn't have its own money; it simply spends yours and mine. The Liberal government just got thrown out by the will of the people because they didn't get that. That money is borrowed in your name and my name and our children's and our grandchildren's names, and our audit is certainly going to get to the bottom of that. But the Liberals only taxed and borrowed and spent. Really, sadly, they tried to lock us into a debtors' prison.

I'll tell you, I came out of retirement to run in this election because I just couldn't stand still when I saw what the Liberals were doing and have done to this great province. I was very, very privileged to work with the late Jim Flaherty when I served as chair of the treasury board advisory caucus when we were dealing with the 2008-09 recession in the States, so I do know the hard work of the line-by-line look at the books needed to get things back on track. Indeed, in Hastings–Lennox and Addington, in my riding, our pitch to voters for this past year was, "Let's get Ontario back on track," because that's what was needed, and it resonated. Of course, we saw that used in many, many other locations.

I can tell you: I'm a blessed man; I really, really am. I have a marvellous wife, going on 48 years, God bless her soul. She has to be one of the most tolerant people I think there is in the world. I think she and the family are coming here tomorrow for a little visit, so I'll introduce her to all you wonderful folks.

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Of course, I have seven grandchildren as well. The world awaits them and their peers, and it's because of them that people like us are all here, because the next generation is so critical. Like those before them, they will make their mark and they will make Ontario, as has been stated in the past, a place to stand and a place to grow, but certainly not as the Liberals left it. Liberals wanted, apparently, all newborns to have a responsibility. It was called to be taxpayers, first and foremost. Sadly, the

Liberals made the debt their biggest accomplishment over the past 15 years that they were there.

When they left office on June 7, Ontario was paying interest of over \$1 billion a month. I remember when they gloated that the time to run up debt was when interest rates were low. Of course, massive, wanton spending and borrowing by the provincial and federal Liberals is helping to force up interest rates these days. That's the part that they never, ever talked about, as if it was going to always continue the same, that there would never, ever be a rise in interest rates. The day of reckoning is approaching now, as we see. And we as the government are acting, before the mess they left becomes an absolute crisis—a crisis that would lead to bankruptcies, unemployment and out-migration of our job-seeking youth.

We made five major commitments in this past campaign. We said that we will put more money in people's pockets by scrapping the carbon tax, by reducing gas taxes by 10 cents a litre, and by giving real tax relief to lower- and middle-class families. We're doing all of those things right now, and as has been said many times in this House, but it bears repeating every time: promises made, promises kept.

And we will clean up the hydro mess by replacing the CEO and board of Hydro One and lowering hydro bills by another 12%. We've done part of that already, and we're doing the rest of it right now. Promises made; promises kept.

We said that we would create and protect jobs by sending the message that Ontario is once again open for business, and by bringing quality jobs back to Ontario by lowering taxes, stabilizing hydro bills and cutting job-killing red tape. We are doing all of these things. Promises made; promises kept again.

We said that we would restore accountability and trust through a commission of inquiry and a line-by-line audit of government spending in order to end the culture of waste and mismanagement in government. Well, that audit is now under way, thank goodness. We will have the results very shortly, in a little over a month from now, and our audit will uncook the Liberal books. Once again, promises made; promises kept.

We said that we will cut hospital times and wait times and end hallway health care by creating 15,000 new long-term beds over the next five years and adding \$3.8 billion in support for mental health, addictions and supportive housing. We are doing all of these things. Promises made; promises kept.

But wait, there's more. We said that we would act quickly to end the York University strike, which has delayed the careers and education of tens of thousands of people. Of course, we are doing that. Promises made; promises kept.

We said that we would fix other vital problems across Ontario. One that's sort of close to my heart and that Premier Ford has committed to fix was front and centre for me just over this past weekend. Our family went for part of a day of fun at the legendary Mazinaw Lake, with its majestic sheer granite cliff that is nearly three times

higher than Niagara Falls and its nearly 500-foot depths of pristine Canadian Shield-cradled water. It's the second-deepest lake in Ontario outside the Great Lakes, and it's found on Highway 41, halfway between Toronto and Ottawa, north of Kaladar in my riding of Hastings–Lennox and Addington. It's shared, of course, with Hastings, Lennox and Addington, and Frontenac counties. If you haven't visited there, boy, you're missing something. You'd better do it. It's similar to the many other hundreds of lakes in my riding, which, if you haven't visited, you should.

There were thousands of people in the area. It was bustling—on the beaches, in the campgrounds, in the cottages and in the excellent local restaurants. It was a tourist postcard just come to life: excellent restaurants; smiles everywhere; excited youngsters creating life-lasting memories; the hazy, lazy days of summer—no, I won't sing it. But there was something missing. What- ever would be missing? There was no cellphone service. I mean not poor, not spotty—none, zero. Who would believe that in this day? Emergency services are near and ready, but only if you have access to one of the dwindling number of land lines, can you actually reach them.

Land lines are disappearing and cellphones have exploded in usage worldwide. But the Liberals ignored these trends, as a lot of rural Ontario doesn't even have access to simple cellular, let alone high-speed. Ontario destinations in rural areas are definitely getting short shrift. Even the high-profile ones—when I say “high,” Mazinaw Rock at 330 feet is about as high-profile as you're going to get in Ontario. I saw the people at risk on the weekend, from babies to great-grandkids, from teens to retirees. No words can excuse the risks that they faced if their loved ones were suddenly in need of help and couldn't get a simple phone call in. So it is truly for the people that we are moving to fix what ails Ontario.

In 2017, we in our Hastings–Lennox and Addington PC association consulted locally on all of the issues that we believed should be fixed. To engage the public we sent emails, we sent letters by snail mail, we Facebooked, we tweeted, we put a survey on our PC website and we held meetings. We heard from the best and the brightest. We heard from the rest and slighted. We heard from people who had inside knowledge and outside experience. We listened, and then we listened again some more. Then we narrowed it down to what we had heard, and submitted five policies to the PC Party process which led to a cross-province vote in November.

I'm proud to say, out of the many policies we put in, almost all accepted, were five sort of key ones that resonated with me, because these all made the final cut and they're embedded in the party's policy. Here are just a few of them, of what we—I'm not going to mention the consultation, because I'd need about 30 pages to 35 pages of notes here to go through, and I don't have that amount of time.

The one policy we submitted was: A PC government will recognize that rural Ontarians deserve equal access

to modern infrastructure. We will put in place a sustainable funding model so rural Ontario citizens have the same access to high-speed Internet, no-gap cell service, safe roads and bridges and fair-priced electricity and other energy resources available to urban dwellers. Does that not just sound fair?

Secondly, we said that a PC government will recognize the heavy budget burden of too much health bureaucracy, use attrition to reduce it and dedicate all savings to increase the ranks of front-line caregivers. You'll notice we said nothing about cutting jobs, but simply putting the focus instead on reallocating all these precious resources.

Thirdly, we said that, given youth unemployment is at an unacceptably high level, a PC government will immediately and aggressively focus on job training and skills development for those in the 15-to-25-year range. The short-term goal is to eliminate existing job gaps and radically reduce youth unemployment. The long-term goal is to create a more balanced workforce with effective pathways, from apprenticeship through to experienced tradesperson.

And, in front of me here—if I'm allowed to mention, of course—is our marvellous MPP from Simcoe North. She has shown us in this past week with her excellent, excellent private member's bill that supports, promotes and reforms the skilled trades in Ontario. As you can tell from our caucus, PC support for the trades is widespread and it is heartfelt, because we don't live in ivory towers on this side of the Legislature. We know who builds Ontario and why we need to support them and their successors.

On education, we heard many things. But in Hastings-Lennox and Addington, this stood out: Rural schools enable elementary students to be educated closer to their home in formative years. Closures must stop immediately. We can't have young people, five or six years of age, spending two to three hours on a bus a day—ridiculous. So we responded by saying that a PC government will stop all rural school closures—and not just rural, but urban as well—until a full study of the local community and student impact is completed. By so doing, we will recognize the core community role of rural and small-town schools and their transcendent importance to current residents and in attracting new rural populations to sustain rural communities. We also recognize the need for a new funding model for rural schools.

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Pithily, we heard the following on the health care challenge: Demography and prudence make it critical that we fix the current unsustainable retirement/health care mix and free up valuable health care facilities across Ontario for the use of all citizens. So we rose to the challenge when we said that a PC government will eliminate the current bottleneck in the province's health care and retirement care system. Currently, too many high-value acute and long-term-care beds are occupied by people who don't need them but have nowhere else to go. Building new retirement home capacity and making it affordable will free up expensive care beds and provide better options for our aging populations.

Of course, the party listened, as we always do. Our government has committed to building 30,000 new long-term-care beds over the next decade. This approach, along with ending hallway health care, directly addresses our health care system bottlenecks. We will engage with professionals who have been there and done that, such as Dr. Rueben Devlin, to ensure that we deploy proven best practices going forward.

We're showing this summer that small is better, small is beautiful, and the sooner, the better. That's why we're moving quickly to do things for all Ontarians, not spacing out needed action for spin value or media deadlines, but now, quickly, to deliver results for Ontarians. Action is needed: We heard that loud and clear.

Indeed, listening was the overriding theme of our local campaign. I certainly have listened. In our riding, we have 16 municipalities that I'm honoured to represent, from Amherst Island to Lake St. Peter, from Adolphus-town to the borders of Algonquin Park, from Yarker to Stirling, from Tamworth to Marmora, from Bancroft to Eldorado to Tweed. Yes, we also listened to Bath and Marlbank and Thomasburg and Ivanhoe and Thurlow and Corbyville and Tyendinaga—wonderful people.

We heard from all these people, who paid increasing amounts for every government service, increasing taxes, increasing power bills, increasing costs for anything the government put its mitts on. We heard about unresponsive government, overpaid government, oversized government and government overreach, as was mentioned today by our Premier. We heard about government usurping local control over the imposition of farmland-destroying wind turbines and solar farms, and we have not forgotten what we heard. We're here to fix this government.

Government can get out of the way, but that alone won't help Ontario become more competitive, because when you ignore competition, you end up with the mess that we've all inherited. We compete with the entire world for customers, for entrepreneurs, for skilled immigrants and for the promise that the future holds. We have done so successfully in the past because we had leaders such as Adam Beck, who harnessed Niagara Falls and allowed us to compete successfully with the US industrial heartland. We had Premiers such as George Drew, Leslie Frost and John Robarts who built subways and expressways and started the vital 400-series highways, despite and against the wishes of the Liberals and others.

The world is a marketplace of ideas. Ultimately, that's where we compete and we win, as long as we stay competitive and keep government out of the way. That's been a big problem for the last 15 years. The nanny-state Liberals kept grabbing the wheel and hitting the brakes, and we saw too much of the ditch and too little of the open road, even as entrepreneurs and the young were expanding their horizons and engaging the world. Developments that should take three to six months were taking three to six years. That's if they weren't abandoned out of frustration. That's just not competitive.

That's the kind of Ontario that the Liberals have left us and one of the reasons that the Liberals found

themselves in a pretty unfortunate situation. I suppose you could call it a comparison, but Ontario has left them behind in the seven seats of their little red minivan.

When we consulted, we heard what real Ontarians think and believe. In our consultations, we heard that while other provinces average about 100,000 rules and regulations, Ontario has over 360,000. Not all of it is red tape, but certainly too much of it is.

The big-government crowd loves this government-knows-best approach. They see themselves as puppeteers. But it's not their Ontario; it's our Ontario. It's still yours to discover and it's ours to recover.

Our policy process found that government outreach has proven to be both expensive and inefficient, so certainly we will scale back government, as is well evident by our actions to date. We will eliminate red tape and return local planning control to communities, subject only to the traditional former role of the Ontario Municipal Board as a provincial referee.

We also found that the government should remove excessive restrictions on the sale of wine and beer in grocery stores and ensure that all local craft beer and alcohol products are sold in all LCBO and beer store locations within a 50-mile radius of where they are produced. I can tell you, in my local area we have 42 wineries that are just world-class now. We've got about another 18 to 20 craft beer operations. If you haven't been down and your palate feels like it needs to be inspired, by all means come on down to Hastings-Lennox and Addington.

We have seen that we weren't alone in these two recommendations aimed at improving our competitiveness, because our government is acting on all fronts. Ontario has lost the competitive edge of cheap power which really made everything possible. We were able to compete, we were able to grow and we were able to take our place as the economic driver in the province of Ontario within the government of this wonderful country. We led the way, and we have become the next thing to the doorstep, indebted \$12-billion-plus a year, on top of a total debt of \$330-billion-plus and counting.

Mr. Bill Walker: Shameful.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: It is shameful. It's disgraceful, because the Liberals' tax-and-spend plan is just further eroding our competitiveness and putting us further and further behind the eight ball. We are at a critical point, a very, very critical point, in the history of this country. It's why I'm here, and I hope I'm not alone.

Interjection: You're not alone.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: And I know, notwithstanding political principles or values or beliefs, that the members on all sides of this House care very, very deeply. While we may have some different thoughts or ideas or philosophies, I'm sure that we all believe in the principle of standing up for what is right within our own mind. This country, and this province, is just a treasure. Like many people, I've had the opportunity to travel throughout the world, and when you do a shop-and-compare, folks, we cannot afford to lose this treasure that we have

here in Ontario. That's why we are all here and that's why we have just an astounding amount of work to do. The responsibility that we have right here is enormous, so let us not take that responsibility lightly. Let's get down to it, get to work, continue the actions of what we're doing because we're doing it for the people.

Interjection: Promise made; promise kept.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Promise kept.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: This is the first time I'm actually doing a full debate in the House since the election of 2018. It's concerning that I'm debating this motion because it's really just this government patting itself on the back, maybe repeating their slogans during their campaign, without any substance to a platform that they presented to the people. They really sold the people these beliefs and ideas, but no details, and so when we come back to the Legislature—and everyone here is excited about coming back and coming to work—the first thing they bring forward is legislation that apparently works for the people, legislating people back to work who are actually exercising their constitutional right to go on strike for better working conditions, for better educational conditions for their students.

That is what they think “for the people” means: to push people back to work—or force people back to work—against their constitutional right to strike. That is not a government that this member just talked about, who said that our ideologies might be different, our philosophies might be different, but we all have good intentions and we're all here to represent the people who elected us. But we're also here to have a dialogue and debate around bills that are presented, not just to have a time allocation and be muzzled on this side of the House, not just to have a bill that's presented on a Friday afternoon.

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When we go to House leaders' meetings, we ask this government, “What is coming up? What bills do you want to debate?”, and the answer we get is, “Oh, we're not quite sure.” We ask, “Well, what ministry?” “Well, we don't know yet.” “Well, what's the topic?” “Well, we have to check.” Do you know who they're checking with? They're checking with the man who was elected to this province, who has no concept of what people really need. And so we get the surprise on Friday, and the people of Toronto are up here today listening to question period to understand.

Those are not all the voices he thinks his government represents. It's in chaos. City council is in chaos. There are people wanting to have referendums, and even the mayor is going against it. The mayor has had to explain why they didn't talk about this before. Mayor Tory even said that it was just a passing idea—a passing idea. Well, something enters his mind, and all of a sudden he thinks everybody is on board and there's legislation before us.

For the first time since I've been elected, we stood up and divided on an introduction of a bill. You've got to feel pretty strongly when you are going to stand up on an

introduction of a bill and oppose someone bringing a bill forward into a Legislature for debate. That's pretty serious, and yet this government is oblivious to that. And the explanation of the man who was elected to this province was, "When I was on city council, that's what I wanted, and I know best. I know how to run things, and come heck or high water, I'm going to do whatever I want."

Do you know what's interesting, Speaker? The member from Timmins really hit it on the nail: This guy who was elected to this province, to lead this province—

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: This guy? The Premier?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: This man—he thinks he's the king of Ontario. This is what the member from Timmins talked about. The people who are on the benches over there are really his subjects, because as soon as he has an idea, everybody starts scrambling around how to make it happen, and they slap legislation together that's truly divisive.

I don't think that's why we're all here. We're happy to hear legislation, we are happy to debate legislation, but when you are arbitrarily doing it and you're just taking a hatchet to things, and you're not consulting people—are we going to have time for committee and actually have representation from all of Toronto, not just the voices that this government is hearing? It has to be a democratic process where they're hearing from everyone.

That's how I think we're sometimes feeling on this side of the House. They don't even want to hear us. They don't even want to hear anything. When question period comes around, they're very boisterous. It's not even a question that's actually asking for that boisterous response, but they feel so emboldened by this power that they want to make sure they're heard, even when someone is asking a question in a reasonable tone.

Honestly, this motion is just them being this boisterous representation of a government where he thinks he has the right to do whatever he wants and we're all just going to sit here and just allow it. Well, we do have the opportunity to represent the people who elected us here, and we do have the opportunity to engage in debate, even if they don't want to hear it. We are going to stand up for the people who brought us here, bring their voices to this Legislature. The people of Toronto won't have that opportunity, Speaker, because they're going to slash the representation that gives people access to representation, to leadership. I know it's difficult when you're trying to call someone and they have such a workload and you get voice mail, and you send an email but they've got all kinds of email in their inbox, and the phone is ringing off the hook. Twenty-five councillors are going to handle all of Toronto? That's quite a workload. I certainly don't envy that. I can't imagine that the people they're going to represent are going to have access and that they're going to hear their voices.

The other thing that this government keeps forgetting is that they are acting completely like Liberals—they truly are. "We're going to rip up contracts. You can't hold me accountable. You cannot proceed with action

against me. If I don't like the compensation of this contract that was agreed upon by two parties, I will dictate to you what compensation you will get." How ridiculous does that sound? This sounds like a Liberal government.

Before the 2011 election, the Liberals ripped up two contracts—Mississauga and Oakville gas plant contracts—because they were going to lose the election, and they wanted a majority government. That's the theory. And what happened was that I was elected under a minority government. The Liberal government was short one seat. So they talked to one of the Conservative members at the time, from Kitchener–Waterloo. They resigned and went on to the WSIB. So then we had a by-election happen. And it just feels like it's Groundhog Day again, because that by-election was because the Liberals were legislating teachers back to work.

These are Liberals; make no mistake about it. You've got the gas plant contracts ripped up; you've got the green energy contracts being ripped up. "You can't sue me. You can't take action against me. I can misrepresent things under the Securities Act and I am safe." Holy smokes; I wouldn't have thought I'd see the day where these kinds of pieces of legislation were actually legal—were actually respecting people's rights. Those are the two similarities. You've got the contracts ripped up; You've got gas plants; you've got green energy contracts. And they were all for votes.

Then you have the York legislation, where they're mandating forcing people back to work because they're on strike. You had the Liberal legislation forcing teachers back into the classroom. But there is something called a collective agreement, and that's two parties—they don't respect contracts, though, so how can we trust people who enter into contracts?

Marriage is a contract; hopefully, you respect those contracts.

Speaker, it's just sometimes difficult to understand the people you worked with in a different makeup in this Legislature before 2018, where they voted against certain legislation or for certain legislation. All of a sudden, they've got this power and they have amnesia. They've forgotten that they voted for the election of the Peel chair. They've forgotten those things. "Oh well, I'm now on this side of the room, so it's all good. What I say is true. What I say is now my belief. I believe everything I'm saying now, because I have power. I have the power, so I believe all the horse malarkey that I'm being fed by the Premier."

1520

I wanted to address the motion in that context, because it truly is a self-fulfilling pat on the back: "We're such great people. We're going to remind you how great we are. The legislation we're going to bring forward is good for you, even if it's not good for you." This motion says, "We're a great government. Rah, rah, rah, rah."

And that's the other thing. It's truly surreal to watch that happen. I hope if I ever become government that my head doesn't get so large and I lose sight of what my values are and what you did in the past. You don't just

say, "I'm completely different now because I can be." Who were you, then, in the first place?

But I'm going to get back to what's really important: the people we represent, the people who gave us their trust and faith to come here and be their voices. One thing that I'm really very concerned about and passionate about since I've been elected is mental health. I presented a bill back in the Legislature, and it was based on an all-party select committee, at a time when you could actually work with your colleagues and you had committees happen and you could hear people's voices. They compiled an all-party select committee that travelled the province and actually heard from families, doctors, patients and people with lived experience about mental health and addictions.

What they wanted to do—their main focus—was actually addressing the problems, and that was in 2010. So we are now eight years here and we still don't have a strategy or a plan, and I know this government has announced that, but we don't know what the details are. It's all a trust-me attitude: "I know best. Don't worry. Don't worry, little Ontarians. We are going to do what's best for you. We're going to pat you on the head and make sure you know that it's coming."

When I brought the bill forward, Speaker, everybody voted for it. That was really amazing. They voted it to go to the committee so that we could have consultation around it. And all those recommendations were going to be discussed in a full way, and people were going to talk about ones they liked and ones they didn't like. I look at all the colleagues there I worked with, and there is a special place in my heart for them. I'm trying to find it again. The recommendations that were in this report—I'm excited to see what they're going to present, because it's really necessary.

I'm going to read the first paragraph of a letter from the members of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. It says: "Ontario needs a comprehensive mental health and addictions plan. Many families have been touched by mental illness and addictions; it is clear that no one is immune. The Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions is pleased to present its final report and recommendations. We trust that our work over the last 18 months, summarized in this report, will lead to the development of this much-needed plan and spark a public dialogue."

Eighteen months of consultation: This is something that I hope this government will look over and take some of these recommendations, because some of your colleagues were actually on the committee and are still here. They can probably tell you how important it is to pay attention to this report. There was a lot of work put into this. People travelled the province for 18 months. I know they were very touched by the presentations that came forward. People spoke about the horrible things they were experiencing—either they experienced it themselves or their family members had a mental health or addiction and couldn't get help; there were gaps in the system and they fell through the cracks.

I can tell you, I had someone come into my office very recently, a mother, and she came to me because her son died by suicide. It's a very, very awful story, and I know we've heard them over and over again, probably too many times. He was in crisis and he went to the emergency room on a Monday. He spent, again, three days in the hallway. Finally, when he got a room, the beds were put together and there was only a curtain dividing each person. He went to the hospital to actually get help. The conditions made him feel worse. He told his mother that: "This is actually making me feel worse."

When we're talking about mental health and addictions, please pay attention not just to the voices in your circle, but to the voices on this side of the House, the voices outside of your political insider friends or influencers.

It's truly important because, in this first little paragraph, it says that "it is clear that no one is immune." It doesn't matter on your socio-economic status; it doesn't matter what family you were born into; it doesn't matter what you're doing today. No one is immune, because it's an illness.

When we were chatting, we were wondering, "Why did it take three days?" And this person finally left the hospital after the three days because they could not bear it anymore. They came home on a Thursday afternoon, and by Friday morning, they died by suicide.

The point being is that no one is immune. We need to get it right, and if no one is immune, we need to listen to every sector of society and actually understand what they're going through so we can create policy to address the needs of what people are telling us, because often-times we impose a system on people. We don't create systems to work for people; we make people work for the system. But the system is not working. Then we're saying, "Well, there's help out there."

One of the recommendations in this report says that we need to have system navigators. People actually need access to system navigators because the system is so complicated. It is, truly, France, how many ministries? Twelve ministries, I think it is, encompass mental health. During the campaign—how many ministries was it, France?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thirteen.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Thirteen?

M^{me} France Gélinas: We're down to 11.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Oh, we're down to 11.

But the point being is that during the campaign, we said, "Do you know what? We've identified that this is a huge problem." It was identified in 2010; I'm sure it was identified before. But now we're saying, "Do you know what? Let's put a focus on this piece of health care, mental health." You shouldn't have to wait three days to get health care for mental health. You don't wait three days if you break your leg, right? They don't make you stand there for three days with a broken leg, waiting for health care, but they make you wait in a hallway on a stretcher for three days to get mental health care for your illness. It doesn't make sense.

I hope you're going to listen to us and share our experiences around mental health.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member for Kitchener Centre.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Merci beaucoup, madame la Présidente, et félicitations.

Before I begin the debate, I just wanted to make sure that I make use of a land acknowledgement. I think it's actually really, really important, given what it is that we are here to discuss. Because we're sitting and having a discussion about the motion of government for the people, I think it's notable that we make clear that this site that we're here and gathered together on is the site of human activity for over 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat, the Petun First Nations, the Seneca and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River, who are Anishinaabe Ojibwe people. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon wampum belt covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the confederacy of the Ojibway and allied nations to peaceably share and care for their resources around the Great Lakes.

1530

I think it's important for us to take a minute to think about that, given that we're saying that this is a government for the people. These are the people. This is the foundation. We the people: The foundation starts there.

The focus of my comments, though, will be just on the last three words of the motion: "trust in government." As leaders across Ontario, that trust has to be built. It takes time. It's respect for all of the people across Ontario. It goes beyond our political affiliation.

With that being the case, I want to take a minute to tell a little story of a woman from Oakville, actually—outside of my riding—who I found on Twitter. She has given me permission to use her name: Lindsey Dalrymple. She had a very clear question for the Premier. She had also tweeted at me, had included my hashtag there, about ODSP. She explained to me that she's in a partnership; her partner is disabled and on ODSP. As a consequence, she's working full-time but her income is getting deducted from the full amount of ODSP funds.

She said that she had reached out to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and the minister responsible for women's issues and hadn't yet heard back. But she had also reached out to the Premier, and the Premier had, in fact, gotten in touch and not actually commented on her question, which was specifically whether or not, in September, the amount for ODSP would actually be increased as promised. She was concerned. She was worried because, on top of this, she now is waiting for a diagnosis for her son—her second child, I believe—who they believe has cerebral palsy. If the funds don't increase, then there's no way for her to survive. She's worried about where she'll be as of Wednesday, August 1.

I bring up that story because I reached out to her and said, "Part of the challenge is that we're having this

discussion about this being a government for the people." She does not feel like she is being included in this discussion. She has reached out directly to the Premier, who is leading the people, and she doesn't feel heard.

I promised her that I would bring this up at the soonest opportunity I had—I was in touch with her yesterday, and now here I am—and that I would bring that to the attention of the government, not out of malice or out of any kind of negativity but because, if they're truly here for the people, then I want us to be able to share this information. And I'm hoping that they will listen.

I also think it's important to take a minute and think about trust and honesty as leaders in Ontario. Just a few days ago, I had a visit with Waterloo Region Community Legal Services. This group provides support to many people who would not be able to afford a lawyer. These are people who don't necessarily feel represented within Ontario. With the current government, they don't know that they're being heard. So I asked Waterloo Region Community Legal Services for some information, just for some statistics: who were they talking to, how many people are they working with, etc. It turns out that within the last year, they've worked with 3,930 people across Waterloo region, and half of the cases that they've had have been housing cases: discussions with people who are in precarious housing situations. If they don't receive the legal help that they are asking for, they're worried about being homeless within the next moment. They also have a fairly new initiative working with Indigenous people, and their Indigenous justice cases have been 51 so far; this is just because it's a new program.

They're part of legal aid, which is funded provincially, and they had requested funding for two things. One was to keep a program going where they actually have a full-time social worker as part of the program, because they realized that people who are living in precarious situations often have a number of issues that they're dealing with before they can even get to address the legal issues. What they did was they had this social worker who would help them to navigate some of these systems.

They also are part of the immigration partnership. They sit on a committee with the immigration partnership, who made note that due to a change in the demographics in Waterloo region, there are a number of people who need help with immigration law. So they had requested funding to be able to hire a junior lawyer to deal with immigration law and to keep the social worker on full-time.

Legal aid had agreed to provide them with the funding. However, the moment that the government arose and was elected, they put a freeze on those funds, so now we're in a situation where, as of August 1, they will have to let go the social worker and no longer renew the contract that they had. Part of the reason is that legal aid had said, "Yes, we're willing to do the project," but they had to review the plan. Legal aid is scared that if they release the funding, there will be unknown repercussions, because unfortunately, as part of the manner in which leadership is being—I don't know; what's the word that

you would use?—executed by the current government, there is no need to provide information to the people. That's causing businesses and different organizations whose job and mandate is to be there for the people, and for the most marginalized of the people, to not know whether or not they can actually help the people.

And so we are now two days away from knowing whether or not a large number of people across Waterloo region will receive the mental health and navigational support that they need so that they can actually get to the big business, which is to deal with the legal issues that they have, which means that in an area which is already suffering from a homelessness crisis, I'm anticipating that there will be even more homeless folks, who have already gone and trusted and hoped that the government is in fact here for the people, who will be sorely mistaken—unless somebody can tell me whether or not that freeze is in fact going to be lifted anytime soon.

My constituents ask me that. I can't tell them, Madam Speaker, whether or not it will be lifted in a day or five days, or whether it'll be case by case. I can't tell them whether we have to wait a year. I can't tell them what the rationale is. That's not the kind of leadership that engenders the trust of the people.

Right after—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): If I could remind all members that the side conversations are immensely distracting. I'm having a challenge hearing the member, who has a naturally quieter speaking voice, so I would encourage the rest of you to use your quieter speaking voices, or to find another space to talk. Thank you.

Sorry, to the member. Please continue.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Right after my meeting with Waterloo Region Community Legal Services, I also had an opportunity to visit another particular situation. It is called tent city. Tent city is something that happens annually, where a number of people who are precariously housed set up a tent in Victoria Park, which is a large park in my riding in Kitchener Centre where many, many festivals happen. They were there for a few days, actually, during the time that I was here. They were asked to leave Victoria Park, Madam Speaker, because there were festivals and such that were planned. So they packed up their tents, and they decided, "Fine. We will just set ourselves up right in front of the regional headquarters for housing."

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They're still in my riding. The tents were all set up. I had an opportunity to speak to some of the folks at tent city. Tent city is organized by Julian Ichim, who has been actively doing this work because nothing is changing. Unfortunately, there is no trust, in this particular situation, that this government will do anything differently, because I'm not able to tell them that there's a change or a shift. I can't tell them any of the information that they're asking for. Though I hear that wanting to work for the people is inherent in the work that the current

government would like to do, I'm not able to back that up with a plan, which, unfortunately, is what my constituents are asking for. I would have to say unfortunately for the current government, not unfortunately for people who want our communities and the province to move forward in a really positive way.

We should always be demanding a plan. We have to know how it's going to happen, because it's only when we share the plan that we're able to figure out whether or not that grand plan is actually going to be helpful for everybody. We all come from so many different places, walks of life, families, lived experiences. There are moments where, in all good conscience, you put a plan together and you don't realize the gaps in that plan.

So, Madam Speaker, again, it's not out of a place of animosity; it's out of a place of lived experience, where I, too, have put together, in leadership roles, plans and felt that it was going to be good for all of the people. It's not until somebody came over to me and said, "Hey, wait a second. In my particular situation, that's what that means," that I've realized that I just missed the boat. Building that trust with the people requires us to really listen to them.

Part of why there was a challenge with York University and the notion of ensuring that they go back to work is that I think folks were forgetting that a lot of those faculty members are also students. So when we're saying that we're doing this for the students, what about the students who are also working part-time in five or six different universities because they have to do that to put the money together to afford to live in their homes? What about them?

I was one of them. I was one of them at York University when they went through the first strike, which was also a very long time. What about my reality? What about the fact that I also have aspirations to be able to move, to build a life, to protect my children, to live in a home and afford rent? When we start to be more concerned about our actions being right as opposed to creating a plan that's actually there for everybody, that's when I get nervous.

From tent city, I want to just bring up one other issue, because I do remember that a number of times in the House we've been told that nobody will lose any jobs. I received a letter and an email from Paul Cox, principal of the St. Louis Adult Learning and Continuing Education Centres, Waterloo Catholic District School Board. He had an urgent request. They have been funded through the Ministry of Education continuously for 23 years, and the current agreement with the province expires on July 31. That would be tomorrow. Members have been informed that funding is frozen and will not be released until the new government provides direction. Without this significant funding source—it's their sole funding source—they will not be able to actively support adult and continuing education principals and managers, which they've been doing since 1987, and that means that they will have to lay off staff as of August 1. August 1 is Emancipation Day, my friends, and August 1 has a lot of

things coming up. We are going to have a lot of information on August 1, I'm hoping.

The impact will be significant in the region and beyond because this organization is the sole provincial stakeholder for adults in continuing education, and working through this agreement has resulted in a direct conduit for the Ministry of Education to the over 60 member school boards that deliver adult and continuing education programs. It's important to note that these programs are geared towards new Canadians, adults with low literacy levels who have limited access to the job market—and some of the reasons that they have limited access are because they are marginalized populations that have fallen through the cracks. They are the most marginalized of the people. I'm not able to tell them whether or not the funding freeze will continue. What happens to all of the people who are no longer able to be served? What happens to the people who are now not going to have employment after having a full, long career doing this work?

I'm very, very concerned that now I'm standing here to discuss what it means to have a government for the people, when not all of the people are being thought of. We can very easily say that, no, of course we don't want, let's say, queer communities to feel uncomfortable when they go to school in September. And yet people are asking me whether or not it's true that in 2014 they were using the 1998 health curriculum. I have a master's and PhD in education. I have spent a lifetime writing curriculum, and I know that in 2014, it was the 1998 curriculum that was being used. Madam Speaker, if I'm to sign off on something that says that they are going to be trustworthy, that this government is one that creates trust, how do I do that if they've stood up in this House and said that in 2014 there was a different curriculum that does not exist?

My queer constituents do not feel like they are being heard or felt or valued. They are scared. They're scared to go to school in September. The teachers are scared. The teachers are worried because somebody has decided that the best thing to do is to have private conversations with students about consent, which doesn't make any kind of sense. As an educator, that's not the way that you would go when you have a curriculum that's ready to do that work.

While we'll sit here and debate whether or not it's for the people, and, given the makeup of the House, we know what's going to happen next, I just want to take a moment and say that this is not for me. This government is not working for my interests at the moment, but I'm hopeful, because I am an eternal optimist. That is the reason why Kitchener Centre asked me to be here, because I will stand up and talk about the issues and I hope that at some point, when push comes to shove and we've got to govern, we will start to actually listen to the people.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: Madam Speaker, I'm honoured to rise today for my maiden speech in this chamber. In addition, I'm especially honoured to be the first international student in the history of Canada to be elected to the provincial Legislature, on behalf of the constituents of Brampton West. I would like to thank each and every one of my constituents for the trust they have placed in me to be a strong voice for our community.

My journey to arrive here has been short in time but long in memories. I'm blessed to have the support of my grandparents, my parents, my in-law family, my wife Manmeen, sons Eshaan and Kabir, my sisters, my friends, my neighbours, all amazing volunteers and the wonderful people of Brampton West who have put their trust in me to be their voice and to represent their interests at Queen's Park.

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I've been incredibly blessed to live what I believe is the Canadian dream. I came to Canada, I completed my studies in wireless networking, and I worked, became a citizen and paid my taxes. I played by the rules. I got married to the love of my life, and we're raising our two young sons in Brampton, Ontario. I've been blessed with the votes of my neighbours and friends in Brampton West, and I pray that I will always live up to the faith they have placed in me.

I came to Ontario in 2008 as an international student from India because I wanted to build the best life possible for myself and my future family. I came to Canada, a land of opportunities and a beautiful country that helps to transform your dreams into reality. In 2008, the year I came to Canada, I had the opportunity to wet my feet in Canadian politics, as federal elections were due. I always believed that it is our duty to advocate for our community, and, therefore, I began knocking on doors with my very great friend and big brother, Parm Gill, in 2008. I began knocking on doors while they share about their issues, dreams and the intervention they seek from the government in different areas.

Something important to be mentioned here: It's been 10 years for me since I came to Canada, and it's been 10 years that I've been a proud Conservative. With all humility, I must say that I am proud to be part of a Conservative team, because every day, my Conservative colleagues inspire me with their enthusiasm and zeal for a better society. They challenge me with their beliefs and with their ideology. They mentor me with their experience. Their knowledge brings substance to our discussions. Most important, they bring humanity and humility to the difficult issues that we face every day as members of this House and as part of society.

When I was knocking on doors during the 2008 election and speaking to Brampton residents, there were three main issues they were concerned with: community safety, expensive hydro rates and unaffordable taxation. Ten years later, as I was knocking on doors for my own candidacy, those were overwhelmingly still the issues that came up. You know what could be the reason? It's

not merely from the political rhetoric that I make this accusation, but I firmly believe that the Liberal government had completely lost its way in the last so many years, making the life of Ontarians worse off.

If I dare say, it happened because my Liberal friends across the aisle, in the past government, instead of believing in a noble vision for society and serving them, actually led it with a mere desire to maintain power. Governments can never sustain themselves on power alone. It needs a vision, passion, and love for society. Securing a beautiful future for our citizenry is what we deserve from government and why we need to be in politics.

The past Liberal government and their policy-making have undermined the importance of fiscal balance. In their continual denial of the fiscal imbalance, their refusal to deal with the need to reform had increasingly made it difficult to maintain balanced budgets and deliver better education, better health care and social programs to Ontarians. Despite continued denial on the part of the previous government, a fiscal imbalance does exist, and we as a responsible government would strive to achieve the fiscal balance without compromising on the quality of education, health care and other social programs for our people. We would do it responsibly and with the consent of the people of Ontario.

This is the most striking difference between our government and the previous government, led by our Liberal colleagues. We respect charter freedoms and we respect the individual. We believe that Ontarians have the ability to make their own decisions, that they know what is best for them, what is best for their children, their families and their communities. Our government's recent work on the sex education curriculum, Hydro One, green energy and standing up for the taxpayers reflects our commitment to make the lives of each Ontarian better. It also aligns so well with our vision of involving people in the decision- and policy-making process for their families, society and the future of Ontario.

Our government has a plan for the people of this province. Our plan includes cleaning up the hydro mess, restoring accountability and trust, ending hallway health care, creating good jobs and putting more money in the taxpayer's pocket.

We are already moving quickly with our first three legislative priorities: bringing an end to the York University strike, repealing cap-and-trade and cancelling wind and solar projects. Promises made; promises kept.

The days of choosing between heating and eating will soon be over as we move to save the average Ontario family 12% on their hydro bills. This is an honest and responsible plan that will save families \$170 on their hydro bill.

As a father of two, one of my major priorities is making the streets safer in all of our communities here in Ontario, including my neighbourhood in Brampton. The year 2018 has seen a large spike in gun violence, not only in Brampton but across the greater Toronto area. Our priority must be to do a better job of keeping guns out of

the hands of criminals and to do what we must to support our front-line police officers. We are blessed to have these men and women in uniform protecting us every day, and our government must do our part by giving them the tools and resources they need to do their job effectively.

Mr. Speaker, we believe in better local government. I'm glad that our Premier is taking action to actually reduce the amount of politicians. During the provincial campaign and my years as a Conservative activist, I knocked on tens of thousands of doors. I never heard a constituent complain that there weren't enough politicians. I did hear that they would love to keep more of their own money, and the residents of Brampton West have kindly requested that the government do our best to keep our hands out of their pockets. I feel this is a reasonable request.

I would like to unequivocally affirm the commitment that I made at those doors during the election: that our government is here for the people and that relief is on the way. With each passing day, I'm proud that our government is working to make the lives of our people easier and more affordable for families in Brampton and across Ontario. After so many years of all talk and no action, I'm proud to be part of a government that is truly for the people and truly does what we say we're going to do.

As the first international student to ever become a member of this Legislature, it is my honour to be here this summer as we begin our work putting this province back on track. To my friends and neighbours in Brampton West, I promise that this government will put your needs and the needs of your families first.

I also look forward to working with my fellow members and engaging Ontarians in debate on the important issues. I do think that, together, we can find a better vision for Ontario. Together, we can and we will make a difference.

We remain committed to standing up for the taxpayer and will continue to innovate ways to improve the quality of their lives and secure a promising future for future generations. We will remain committed to listening to you and serving you with care and passion. We want to make Ontario the envy of Canada.

We listen, we care and we deliver. Together with the people of Ontario, we'll make this work for everyone. I promise we won't let you down.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):
Further debate?

Hon. Doug Ford: I must admit that it's great to be here for my first maiden speech in a packed House. It's great to see all the NDP cheering me on next door there.

During the campaign, I criss-crossed the province, from one corner to the other corner. I spoke with tens of thousands of people. They all said the exact same thing: They were tired of the same old, same old government. They were tired of a government that didn't listen. They were tired of a government that put the insiders first and forgot about the little guy.

The people of this great province elected a PC government. They elected a government for the people—the

first government for the people. This is why I'm here today, standing in the Legislature, standing up for the little guy, standing up for families and standing up for the most vulnerable.

I ran on a commitment to restore accountability and trust and to reduce the size and cost of government, and that is exactly what we're going to do in the next four years.

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Today our Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing tabled an important bill that, if passed, will get things moving at the city of Toronto once and for all, a bill that will streamline Toronto city councillors.

I was down there for a number of years, and every single councillor down there—no matter what side they were on; they could be on the left, the right, the centre—said, “This is absolutely dysfunctional.” It's not against one certain councillor. It's not against the mayor, because I talked to the mayor; he knows it's dysfunctional. Mayor Miller knew it was dysfunctional. Rob knew it was dysfunctional. We couldn't get anything done. You can't get anything done when you have 47 politicians sitting around the table, all having the exact same power, protecting their little fiefdom. That's an issue. No matter if you work in the private sector or if you get elected in the public sector, there has to be structure, and it's like the Wild West down at city hall, I can assure you.

I want to take you back to the years that I was down at city hall, when we were spending like a bunch of drunken sailors—and I apologize to all of the drunken sailors, because at least they spend their own money; they don't spend the taxpayers' money.

In my time there, I fought for accountability and trust, I fought to reduce the size and cost of government, and when we focused on that—surprise, surprise—we saved the taxpayers over a billion dollars.

I fought to make Toronto an even better city, but there was constant gridlock at Toronto city hall. Just as each and every one of us drives around the city, drives around the GTA—no matter where you go, it's absolute gridlock. The reason it's gridlock is, you couldn't get anything done when it came to transit. Every councillor at city hall, every mayor of Toronto, wants to get the city moving. They all want to build transit. They all want the city to grow. But for the last 15 years, as I said earlier, it has been nothing but gridlock at city hall. For far too long, the people of Toronto have watched city council go around and around and around.

If you ask anyone in the city, if you ask anyone in the GTA, if you ask anyone in Ontario, “How does the city of Toronto work?”—every single person I've talked to says that there are too many politicians.

I don't remember any consultation when they wanted to cut the 800 police or they wanted to raise taxes or they wanted to get themselves in debt another \$550 million or if they wanted to increase politicians. Maybe I was away campaigning, but I can tell you that I never heard that whatsoever.

It's about driving efficiencies, respecting the taxpayers, putting money back into the taxpayers' pocket

instead of the government's. It's about empowering the people instead of the government.

I know that the opposition love big government. They love to spend. They love high taxes. We aren't cut from the same cloth. We're cut from a different cloth. We're cut from a cloth of reducing taxes, making smaller government, having accountability and transparency—

Mr. Michael Mantha: Really?

Hon. Doug Ford: Absolutely.

It's kind of fun talking this way.

For far too long, the people of Toronto have watched city council go around and around in circles and fail to act on critical issues facing the city. Gridlock and dysfunction are stopping Toronto from building transit. The deadlock at Toronto city hall has made it even harder to get things done and get things built.

I can tell you that I was there numerous times for a 10-hour debate on getting Mrs. Jones's cat out of the tree. We would sit there and debate about anything for 10 hours. After 10 hours and thousands of pieces of paper going around, nothing got done. Nothing got done. But guess what. At the end of 10 hours, we all agreed to go get Mrs. Jones's cat out of the tree.

That's a waste of time. People get frustrated. It makes it harder to deal with real problems we face. That is why it is time to reduce the size and cost of municipal government.

Madam Speaker, we're going to streamline Toronto city council. We've seen no one stand up, years and years and years, asking politicians to reduce the size of council. When I went down there, I threw it out on the table once. I threw it out on the table, just cold turkey. I'm not going to mention it's like asking the turkeys to vote for Thanksgiving, but I threw it out there cold turkey and I ended up getting 17 votes. I was five votes away from winning, and I'm thinking there's an appetite, because the 17 people that voted to reduce the size of council are listening to their constituents.

I'm going to wander around Toronto. I'm going to hit the areas—I'm going to target some of my areas and the GTA, but I'm going to target some of the NDP and Liberal areas. My first stop is going to be in Brampton Centre. I'm going to go door-knocking, and when they open the door, I'm going to ask them very simply, “Do you want larger government, do you want duplication in government, or would you rather take \$25 million and put it towards priorities that matter to the people?” I will track it. You'll hear from me again this week about every single person, what riding they're from, and how many people agreed on reducing the size of city council, reducing the duplication we see at the regions—and there's a lot of duplication at the regions; I hear it constantly.

My friends, it's time to start respecting the taxpayers. I can't wait. And I can't wait to get up to Timmins and talk to the people up there. I can't wait to tell them that their MPP is against mining, against lumber.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member for Timmins on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I just want to assure the Premier that he is always welcome to the city of Timmins and we'd be glad to have you.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): That is not a point of order.

I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: I'm still coming to Timmins. We're going to have a big crowd there, and I'm going to tell them their MPP wants more politicians. He doesn't want to have mining, he's dead against forestry, because he's part of the anti-mining, anti-forestry, high-tax government. We'll see how the folks in Timmins like it.

Mr. John Vanthof: That's like saying I'm anti-dairy farming.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order.

Hon. Doug Ford: Well, you have anti-mining folks on your team, I'll tell you.

My friends, we have 25 MPPs, 25 MPs, 22 school trustees in the public system, 12 school trustees in the separate, two in the French public and one in the French separate. If I went around Toronto—and I'm going to do this. I could door-knock anywhere—I'll even door-knock in your strongest NDP area—and ask them if they want more politicians. This plan will get action, it will restore trust and accountability, and it will save the taxpayers \$25 million. I've never met anyone, anyone ever, that's run up to me and said, "Doug, I want more politicians, please. More politicians." Some \$25 million back into the kitty.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order.

Hon. Doug Ford: You're just lucky we don't have a Ford running in Timmins. You're lucky. I could tell you this, Mr. Timmins: Taxpayers will be happy to trade a bunch of politicians like yourself at city hall for millions of dollars that can be reinvested in the city's priorities.

Applause.

Hon. Doug Ford: I thank you, and I appreciate the applause from my opposition. Come on board anytime you want.

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The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Boy, what an opening here this afternoon. It is an honour to stand up on behalf of the good constituents in Windsor-Tecumseh and speak on this bill.

I listened very intently, Premier, to what you had to say. What I didn't hear during the campaign speeches and announcements and Ford Nation media releases was that you were going to do this if you got elected. You campaigned on smaller government; of course, that's provincial government. But Premier, we didn't hear you on the campaign trail say, "When I'm elected, I'm going to cut the size of Toronto city council in half." That may have been of interest to some of the people in Toronto.

Maybe you would have got more votes, but then again, maybe not. But you weren't open; you weren't transparent. You didn't say to the people in Toronto, "This is what I'm going to do."

I find it somewhat interesting when the Premier says he was down in Toronto for four years and it was dysfunctional, that you couldn't get anything done. And yet, 20 seconds later, the Premier says that he and his brother saved a billion dollars.

Hon. Doug Ford: The whole team did, not just Rob and I.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Well, how do you save a billion dollars in a dysfunctional government?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Good point.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock. I would also like to make a good point: that this is a chamber for debate that goes through the Speaker and not just across back and forth. So if we could bring the House back to order and decorum, please.

The member can continue. Please restart the clock.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you for that reminder, Speaker.

Sometimes, Premier, as you know, you've got to read between the lines. Through you, Speaker, I'm saying to the members opposite, including the big guy in the front row, that sometimes you have to read between the lines. So when I hear the Premier of Ontario stand up in the House this afternoon and talk about reducing the size of municipal government and then he ties that into the number of school board trustees we have publicly, we have separately, we have French and we have French public—he's listing all of the trustees. And I'm saying to myself, Speaker, through you to the Premier: In between the lines, is he going to be getting rid of the school boards? Is he going to be eliminating a number of trustees?

He's certainly sending a signal that when you talk in one breath about reducing the size of municipal government, which has nothing to do with school boards—those are the people who deal with municipal issues as opposed to educational issues—just in between the lines, there could be another message coming out of here, a message that wasn't campaigned on. The leader of the Green Party was up front: He said that he was going to amalgamate the school boards, but he's one voice here.

I just think that the inner cabinet of these 25 members at Toronto city hall will probably have more power than the provincial government now because they'll have a smaller number to deal with to get things done.

When you look at what is written in the motion—the wording—that we're dealing with this afternoon, when we hear the words "restore accountability and trust in government," are you kidding me? Here's Toronto, which did—they studied for, what, two, three or four years. Some members opposite weren't paying attention, as has been enunciated this afternoon, but they had decided, after a public consultation process, to increase

the number of councillors to deal with their population. That was to even it out as best they could.

In a democracy, when you have a full and lengthy consultation process—and “process,” I believe, is the key word here—when you have a process, you follow it. You have public consultations. We’ve heard the Premier say that consultation is important. If you think of the changes coming in the Education Act, he says that not enough people were consulted before and they’re going to consult today and have the biggest consultation in the history of Ontario. Well, they just had consultation in Toronto, and they made a decision—a decision that the Premier didn’t like, so now, without a public consultation, he is just going to slam something through.

And so I ask, what’s wrong with this picture? How can you on one hand say, “We haven’t had enough consultation. There was none,” when, in fact, the Liberals say that they consulted widely? The Premier has used numbers in the House about how many parents were actually consulted; it was in the thousands. But then nobody gets consulted; the mayor of Toronto says he heard a word or two in passing but didn’t take it seriously, and Toronto city council certainly wasn’t consulted on this at all.

“We don’t like the results, so we’re going to change it. We don’t talk about it during an election, but we’ll meddle during the municipal election. We’ll create a bit of chaos.” A former Conservative minister by the name of John Snobelen—I believe he was the education minister back in 1995—said, “We will create a crisis in education, and then we’ll resolve it, and that way we’ll get people to buy into what we were pushing if we resolve the crisis.” I think the Premier is creating a crisis at Toronto city hall.

You know, it’s one thing if you campaign against something and you do it, that’s fine. Mike Harris told us exactly what he was going to do in his Common Sense Revolution. He had the book out there. We knew what was coming. The Premier didn’t campaign on getting rid of half of city council. He didn’t campaign on stopping the election of chairs in the four regions, in Peel, York, Muskoka and Niagara. That wasn’t part of anybody’s platform.

It’s like the Liberals in the election previous. They did not go door to door, as we’ve heard many times in this House, saying, “Elect us and we’re going to sell public shares in Hydro One.” They didn’t do it. The Premier at the time stood in this House and said, “I’m not going to sell Hydro One.” Then, of course, we know that the backroom deals were cooked and Hydro One was sold.

Hon. Doug Ford: Apples and oranges, my friend.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Well, apples and oranges; it’s one thing what you say publicly, and it’s one thing what you do in the backrooms.

You may not like the number of representatives you have in Toronto. You say they’re dysfunctional, and you look at how many constituents each councillor has. In fairness, whatever number you’re bringing in in Toronto, is that going to be the provincial formula? Because I

heard in the morning that Ottawa, for example—a good city, with a population less than a million—has 23 councillors for less than a million. We’ve got—what?—three million in Toronto, and we’re going to have 25 councillors.

What I find interesting, though, Speaker, is when I look to my friend, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and I look at his home community of Brockville. The city of Brockville has fewer than 30,000 people: 29,830 or something, and they have a mayor and eight councillors for less than 30,000. How much are we going to chop, how many councillors are going to be axed, in Brockville when we do this fairness thing across the province? Are we going to have one or are we going to have two?

Hon. Doug Ford: Let’s just compare 30,000 with a \$12-billion budget—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock. A reminder that the debate goes through the Chair and not across the alleyway, it would seem. Please and thank you.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yeah, come on.

Hon. Doug Ford: Hurry up, because I’ve got to get going. I’m giving you some respect here.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Premier. The people in Windsor would like to see you down there after your visit to Timmins.

Now, I’m sure the Premier knows that his Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing—

Hon. Doug Ford: A great guy.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes, and back in 1982, he was the youngest mayor ever elected in Canada.

Interjections.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes, and he was there until 1991. He was a former president of AMO, and I think he was 22, right out of university. He had this big Afro; times change. Seriously, look at the photos. I remember it well, as a reporter at the time. This was a big news story back then, a young guy getting elected.

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But I didn’t hear the minister when he was campaigning either, saying, “Vote for me this time because as soon as we get in, we’re going to chop up the number of councillors in Brockville, we’re going to make them even”—if we can do it in Toronto, we’ve got to treat everybody fairly. You can’t have one rule for Toronto and a rule for Timmins and a rule for Windsor; you’ve got to treat everybody the same way.

The minister said that he’s going to be consulting at AMO in a couple of weeks. I’ve already put out some feelers to my contacts at AMO, my contacts around the province. I was a vice-president at AMO at one time, when I was a city councillor in Windsor. Some people are really nervous out there because they don’t know what to expect. They do not know if regional government is going to work, not going to work.

I know your friend, my friend, the former mayor of Mississauga, Hazel McCallion, who supported you. On one hand, she supports Mr. Trudeau in Ottawa; and

Charles Sousa, the Liberal incumbent who ran, but was not elected in her riding; but she came out in support of you. I've read her book. I'm sure you have, too. She doesn't want regional council in Peel at all. She says it's a waste of money.

When I hear the Premier say that he's going to put the kibosh on the election that was consulted on and voted on by the members, many of them in cabinet who were in the last Conservative opposition, now in government, they supported the changes that were coming in Peel, in Niagara, in York and in Muskoka. Now we're hearing a different tone, arguments that weren't made during the campaign.

I'll take a moment, if I could, just to congratulate the mayor of Tecumseh, Gary McNamara, a former president of AMO, as many of you know, who was just acclaimed. He has three councillors. He used to have four wards; now they're expanding to five, five wards in the town of Tecumseh for a population of about 25,000 people. Congratulations to Andrew Dowie, Bill Altenhof and Tania Jobin for being acclaimed out there as well. They were incumbents. When I emailed the mayor this morning talking about what was going on, he says, "You know, it's Mike Harris all over again, that you create a crisis. Is it going to be the tip of the iceberg?"

This isn't a prop, Speaker, but I'm going to make reference to it. It's called A Government for the People. It's the throne speech. I opened the throne speech again this morning—and I'm reading some of the key elements of it. I'm just trying to make sense out of what this bill is, compared to what was in the throne speech. Let alone this was not mentioned during the campaign, this was not mentioned in the throne speech.

A government is going to be judged by "the manner in which it conducts itself." Interesting. "It will also require us to move past the politics of division." What is more divisive right now than what has just been introduced?

The thing that I found most intriguing out of all of my highlights in the throne speech, let alone that they are going to assume "responsibility with great humility," was the mention of Toronto in here. Toronto is mentioned. "Your new government will also respect our municipal partners"—respect.

"Whether by partnering with Toronto and other GTA municipalities to build a world-class transit system" or "addressing the transportation needs of other Ontario urban centres" or "putting an end to unfair, unaffordable green energy contracts"—of course. But where is the respect for the municipal partners? "We said we were going to do it in the throne speech, and then out of the blue, we turn around and"—you know Paul Bunyan? You remember, a big guy, had an axe, had an ox named Blue, right? A big, blue ox.

We don't have a bull in a china shop; we've got the full-blown ox in the china shop. And Bunyan, by the way, if you go back to the folklore of the word "Bunyan," where it came from, it's a French-Canadian name. Out of the folklore, it's very similar to a Quebecois expression for "unexpected." What's the other word they

put with it? It doesn't matter, but it's an expression, "bonyienne," which in Quebecois means, "Boy, this is astonishing. Wow, what's going on here?" That's what they must have been astonished at down at Toronto city hall.

I mean, you talk about Doug Ford, you talk about Mike Harris, you use their names in a sentence—if you read the Globe and Mail this morning, John Ibbitson was saying that what Mike Harris did way back then—his strategy was to introduce a whole bunch of things, create all kinds of turmoil, get people all upset, and then move on and introduce something else that would get another group all upset. There were a lot of province-wide strikes back then. They closed and amalgamated hospitals. They raised university tuition, amalgamated school boards, stripped them of their power for taxation and forced amalgamation on Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa and other municipalities despite furious local opposition. They downloaded responsibilities to local governments.

Demonizing progressive voters living in the down-towns was part of that strategy. So one has to ask, are we taking notes from the Mike Harris campaign back in 1995 and are we doing that again here? Is this the way we're going to go? Is this the way that we're going to build a province? Is this the way we're going to treat municipalities with respect, by dumping this on them in the middle of a campaign?

I remember when we sat as a committee and we heard from municipalities, municipal leaders and the public here at Queen's Park when we had the public consultation about making these changes on regional government. I remember a regional councillor in Peel from Brampton, Gael Miles, who I used to serve with on the board at FCM, coming and saying, "We've got a problem such that the city of Mississauga, with its population, just controls Peel regional council, so we support the concept of having an elected regional chair as opposed to Mississauga just appointing one of their people all the time to conduct business the way Mississauga wants it." So it was going to make it a more fair way of dealing with that region. Instead of having that elected person, the Premier said, "Let's just put a pause. We're going to push the pause button," as he and the minister have said.

When you read the clippings out of the paper, they're not very favourable at the moment. Of course, things can and things will likely change several times, but of all the clippings you come up with—here's one, Jennifer Yang, staff reporter in the Sunday Toronto Star: "Nearly half of Torontonians disapprove of both Premier Doug Ford and his plan to dramatically shrink"—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order. I will remind everybody on both sides that right now, the member from Windsor-Tecumseh has the floor—he and he alone. He may continue.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): In case I wasn't clear, it was not "the member from Timmins" I said; it was, "The member from Windsor-Tecumseh may resume."

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. I could use some quotes from the Toronto Sun, if that's more applicable. "NDP leader Andrea Horwath accused Ford of thinking he's 'king' and acting like a 'dictator,' motivated by a grudge he still holds against Toronto council from the time when he and his brother Rob were members."

Liberal MP Adam Vaughan, written up in the Toronto Sun: "People looking for answers about community safety and other urban issues aren't concerned about how many politicians sit on council...."

"They don't like Toronto," Vaughan said. "This is about demolishing a significant political power base which provides opposition to the actions of Queen's Park.... It's a political stroke of genius if you like breaking cities."

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"Toronto Mayor John Tory, ... seeking re-election, said he told Ford that the stunning and massive change mid-campaign was not right...."

"What we don't need, and what I just can't support, is change being rammed down our throats without a single second of public consultation, and on top of that, done in the middle of the election period itself."

Interjection.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, I know that the Premier has a lot of questions about what's in the media these days, and he has a different take on, perhaps, what the mayor of Toronto has said privately, but what's on the public record is that people don't like it. People think it's somewhat outrageous.

I'm glad I had the opportunity to talk about a few of these things this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Fellow members of the assembly and our guests, it is a privilege to rise here in the chamber to give my inaugural speech this afternoon.

I would like to start by taking the opportunity to congratulate the new Speaker on her election to this important position. I know that with her experience in the assembly, she will serve us very well in debates to come—and there will be debates to come.

I would also like to offer my congratulations to all new and returning members of the 42nd Parliament of Ontario.

Personally, I would not be here without the support of my wife, Marie; my two sons, Michael and Joey; and my incredible volunteer team, as well as my first-time campaign manager, Michael Smith.

When Michael was asked to produce a plan for the campaign, he produced a 92-page plan. When the party saw this plan, they couldn't believe it. He had broken down, poll by poll, what we had to do to get our vote out. At the end, he was off by 100 votes.

I would like to thank them all again for all their hard work. It is a great honour to be elected by the people of Mississauga–Lakeshore to represent them in this assembly.

Mississauga–Lakeshore is a spectacular and diverse riding, from our historic lakefront villages like Port Credit, where I grew up and where my family's roots run four generations deep, to our new and vibrant multicultural communities, to the hidden beauty of the Rattray Marsh and the waterfront trail.

In fact, this building that we're in today was constructed with over 10 million bricks of pink sandstone from our Credit River valley. For those who don't know, it's known as the Credit River because the French fur traders would supply goods to the Aboriginal population on credit against furs that they would deliver to Port Credit the following year. Today they are known as the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

Today, Port Credit is the home to cultural festivities: parades, concerts and celebrations throughout the year. I invite you all to come there and enjoy with us.

From Port Credit to Mineola, Clarkson to Lorne Park, from Sheridan to Erindale, Cooksville to Lakeview, so many small communities have joined together to build a bright future all along our waterfront, and a community spirit in our youngest generation and in the residents new to Mississauga–Lakeshore and often new to Canada.

Over 36% of our residents are immigrants or refugees. Our children are growing up in a community that is growing more and more diverse every year, yet the community and our willingness to work together remains as strong as ever. This diversity is our greatest strength, and my wife and I can't imagine raising our children anywhere else.

It has been a great privilege to serve on our local rate-payers' association, our parent councils and as a board member and property manager of the Mississauga Canoe Club.

I know I will be privileged to continue the work in our community of the late Jim Tovey, on the redevelopment of our waterfront from Inspiration Port Credit to Inspiration Lakeview.

In representing Mississauga–Lakeshore, I know that I'll follow in the footsteps of many great MPPs, including two Premiers of Ontario—T.L. Kennedy and Bill Davis. Federally, Mississauga–Lakeshore was once represented by Gordon Graydon, who served as leader of the official opposition in the House of Commons. He helped to build the Conservative Party in Ontario by founding Young Conservatives clubs throughout the province.

More recently, we were represented at Queen's Park by Margaret Marland for 18 years. She served as chair of the PC caucus and as the minister responsible for children in the Harris government. In Ottawa, Paul Szabo represented us for 17 years. Voted the hardest-working MP, he served as chair of the ethics committee. I was truly honoured to have the support of both—Mrs. Marland as a Conservative and Paul Szabo as a Liberal—in my campaign. It was incredible to have a former Liberal MP supporting me. As the Premier said, it doesn't matter what party you supported in the past; people all across Ontario came together to vote for change, for the people.

I must also recognize and thank the former Minister of Finance, Charles Sousa, for his 11 years of service here. Though we often disagreed, he will always have my respect for his work with the Compass food bank and other local charities—which I plan to continue—and for his private member's bill on financial literacy education. I wish him well in his future endeavours.

I would also like to thank Boris Rosolak, our NDP candidate in Mississauga–Lakeshore, for his spirited and honourable campaign. He earned more votes than any other NDP candidate in our riding's history, and I am very proud to call him my friend.

The motto of this place is "Hear the other side," and I can promise that I will always try to do this. I am here to represent all of Mississauga–Lakeshore, including those who voted for Mr. Sousa and Mr. Rosolak.

As I said, my family's roots run four generations deep in Mississauga–Lakeshore. Our original family home is designated as a heritage property—the Cuzzetto Residence—under the Ontario Heritage Act. In 1950, my grandfather owned a shoe repair shop attached to the Vogue Theatre in Port Credit, where the Crooked Cue now stands. It hosted my victory party on election night. The store where my grandmother bought her groceries became my campaign office. Our doctor's office, just across the street from my church and my elementary school, has become my constituency office. I could go on for days on this.

My mother worked at Riverside school.

My father worked at the Texaco refinery. At the time, employees were given a small plot of land for personal gardens. This same land became my home and garden today. Because of his work at the refinery, my dad died of lung cancer and asbestosis when I was 18. Today I'm proud to join Queen's Park's lung health caucus, and my friend Frank Giannone is helping to transform the refinery's land into Port Credit's West Village, a new and vibrant mixed-use community.

I've had a 31-year career at Ford Motor Company's Oakville assembly plant, most recently as a vehicle auditor, checking to ensure that our products meet stringent quality requirements. I'm a 31-year union member, as well, first with the Canadian Auto Workers, and then Unifor. I've also worked for my family's local small business, importing and wholesaling products from Italy to retailers in the GTA and New York.

These experiences have shaped my politics and helped me build relationships with so many residents of our community. They have made me realize how much I want to serve them, but also how much needs to be done to make Ontario a better place for everyone. That's ultimately why I ran for office: to ensure that we make the right decisions here for our children and for the generations that follow them, so that Ontario can remain a place to stand and a place to grow.

I hope to be able to contribute to the development of thoughtful and progressive conservative policies in the 42nd Parliament of Ontario.

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It is important for me to note in my speech in this House my faith in the Progressive Conservative Party and in our Premier to serve the interests of the working people of Ontario, including union members. Many on both sides of this chamber may sometimes forget it, but there is a huge difference between militant union activists and grassroots union members. Over a quarter of Ontario's workers are unionized—more than the entire population of Mississauga—and the vast majority of them are moderate, hard-working people.

When hydro rates skyrocket up to 400% and our businesses struggle to deal with red tape—an average of over 30 new regulations every day for 15 years—Ontario becomes uncompetitive for business. Our grassroots union members know this better than most, as they have suffered as Ontario had lost 350,000 manufacturing jobs, including many well-paying jobs in the automotive industry.

While we can't accomplish everything this summer, by ending the York University strike and by cancelling cap-and-trade and the White Pines Wind Project, I agree with our former Liberal Finance Minister Greg Sorbara that we are off to a great start. Reducing the cost of hydro is critical to Ontario's long-term competitiveness, and it is not fair for our students to lose their academic year because of a five-month-long strike.

Moving forward, the commission of inquiry will restore accountability and trust in our government's financial reports. It will allow us to finally get our debt under control. Historic investments in health care will help us build up our long-term-care and mental health systems and put an end to hallway medicine.

Investment in education will help us address the skills gap, particularly in the skilled trades and the high-tech sector. Tax relief will make life easier and more affordable. It will help to make Ontario the economic engine of Canada once again.

Madam Speaker, I am excited to be part of this government led by the Premier, and I'm excited to see what we can achieve for the people over the next four years. Once again, I would like to thank the people of Mississauga–Lakeshore for placing their trust in me. I will do everything I can to ensure they are well-represented in this assembly, correctly. I look forward to working with everyone here over the next four years.

As well, it is with great pride today that I congratulate canoeist Katie Vincent from the Mississauga Canoe Club and her teammate Sophia Jensen for their gold medals in the 200- and 500-metre events at the world championship in Bulgaria. As a former property manager and board member at the Mississauga Canoe Club, it has been an honour for me to watch Katie develop into one of the world's top athletes in canoe sprint. Katie has also become a true role model for all women and girls in sport.

Katie became a paddler at the Mississauga Canoe Club in 2006 at the age of 10. In 2012, she competed in 19 major international events and achieved a podium result

in all but two: in 2014, junior world champion; in 2016, U23 world champion; in 2017, senior world champion, setting two world-record times; and in 2017, Ontario female athlete of the year.

Earlier this year, Katie was awarded the 2018 Ontario female athlete of the year award at the Ontario Sport Awards. Presented by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport since 1965, this award celebrates the experience of Ontario amateur athletes, individuals and sport organizations. This is the highest honour the province bestows on an athlete or organization and determines excellence in sport. Together with Sophia Jensen and their teammates, Katie's success over the weekend shows that the future for women's canoeing in Canada is very strong.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Katie's coaches and, of course, the staff at the Mississauga Canoe Club in Port Credit, which has already produced so many world and Olympic medallists.

As our late Councillor Jim Tovey said, the water, both the lakefront and the Credit River, is the community's greatest resource.

With the inclusion of women's sprint canoeing in the Summer Olympics for the first time in Tokyo in 2020, Katie will have the opportunity to compete at the highest level. I know that we all will be cheering for her and for Team Canada.

As well, I would like to speak a little bit about my campaign. When I got into this race—what was it? 18 months ago—I was going against one of the toughest incumbents that the Liberals had to put against me. It was a tough battle. Did I imagine being here today? Probably not.

Interjection: You earned it.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I kept knocking on doors. I knocked on doors for 18 months and I would continue going back. I knocked on 50,000 doors. I went back to one gentleman, and I still remember him today. He goes, "I was expecting you to come back, Rudy." He goes, "Do you remember me?" I go, "Yes, I do. I remember you were cutting your grass." And he looked at me and he goes, "Wow, how can you remember that?" I said, "I'm very good at remembering things." He goes, "Well, I'm a card-carrying Liberal. I'm going to take your lawn sign and I'm voting for you."

Mr. Percy Hatfield: You didn't need Hazel.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Yes, Hazel did not support me; she did not.

Mrs. Nina Tangri: And you won anyway.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Thank you.

But I continued working. I went to communities that we had never gone to in the riding, areas that we had called unwinnable, but I kept knocking on doors. The people came out and said, "Wow, you have been here all your life in this community and we are going to vote for you." It was very humbling at the time; it still is today.

As my family goes back four generations in the Port Credit area, it's unbelievable that I've been there that long. Like I said, the Crooked Cue, where my grand-

father's shoe repair was in 1953—people are still talking about it. If I speak to any of my campaign team out there, I know that all they remember is my roots in the community. Every time I would go to doors I would tell them about my roots, my four generations: my father working at the Texaco refinery that's right in the riding; myself, working at the Ford Motor Co. for 31 years.

Some people go: "You were a union member. Why are you a Conservative?" We've lost 350,000 manufacturing jobs in this province. We have to bring them back. We have to do whatever to create jobs.

As we continued going through that campaign, it got more and more difficult. At one point, we had about 10 volunteers a day and my opponent had 30 to 40 volunteers going door to door. He had everybody on the ground. He had the mayor and the past mayor too on the ground, and we just kept working. I told my volunteer team, "Just keep knocking on doors and the results will come."

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: You got it done.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I followed you on Facebook. You did an awesome job.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Thank you. Thank you. It was very difficult because I was working shift work at the time as well at the Ford Motor Co.

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Such dedication and commitment.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Thank you.

During the days that I was working, in the evening I would keep knocking on doors. And when I was working night shift, I would knock on the doors during the day. We kept doing that until election day.

I'm a proud child of an immigrant family that came here from Italy with a suitcase. All they told me is, "Work hard and you will get ahead." That's what I did: I worked hard, and I ended up here today to speak to you.

1650

Unfortunately, like I said, my father passed away when I was 18, of asbestosis—I had to watch him deteriorate in his bed at home; it was one of the worst things—which was caused by the Texaco refinery. As a young child, I didn't know what I would do at that time, because losing your father at that age, knowing that my mother was a housewife and worked part-time at the school—I knew it was difficult for me to get ahead.

So I just kept working and kept persevering, and today, I ended up here at Queen's Park as your MPP for Mississauga-Lakeshore. I thank you very much for everything.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member from Algoma-Manitoulin.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Thank you, Speaker. It sure is nice seeing you in that chair.

I'm always happy when I see my friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound sitting across the way. I'll be touching on a few words in my speech later on as I'm talking about this motion.

I want to thank the member from Mississauga-Lakeshore for having shared a lot of the stories, his

personal experiences from home and what got him here. I look forward to maybe having a chat with him in regard to his family.

I remember when I came in—and there were a few members that are still in here. I came in in the class of 2011. We were an eager bunch. When we came in, I remember having discussions as new members as we were sitting in the House and meeting up at receptions downstairs and talking to each other and talking about the decorum—

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Come on. Come on.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I see the member from Nepean. You were part of those discussions. Oh, I remember you. I remember you. We had many discussions.

Interjection.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Yes, through you, Speaker: I remember those discussions. They were adamant discussions, and we always—“Really? This is how things happen here? This is how we conduct ourselves? Wow! I can’t believe it. We’re going to change things. We’re going to make sure decorum is respected. We are going to do things.”

Mr. Percy Hatfield: And then what happened?

Mr. Michael Mantha: And then we became members.

I stand here with great pride, and I look at the new members who have joined us here in this Legislature. I’m going to challenge you to rise: Rise to the occasion, rise to the decorum, rise on behalf of your constituents and hold yourself with great pride when you do speak here and put away a lot of the partisanship.

I want to remind you about the results in the election. I hear what this government is saying is. They rose. They got 74 seats.

Mr. Bill Walker: Seventy-six.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Seventy-six. They have the balance of power. They have the majority government. However, the other part of that equation is that 60% of Ontarians did not—hold on, let me rephrase that: 60% of Ontarians voted for something else.

Some of them—most of them—voted for promises of better health care. A lot of them voted for promises on tackling our hydro issues. A lot of them voted on changing and making sure that there are no longer waiting times and the crisis that we see in our hospitals and hallway medicine. A lot of them looked for new jobs, new opportunities and better wages. There are a lot of people that voted for those things too.

I want to remind this Conservative government and the new members that have joined these ranks that you’re a government for all, not just for some, not just the 40% that elected you. You’re a government for the entire province.

And I remember the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound—I think he will remember this issue that both of us tackled, a very important issue that was going to hurt the economy of Manitoulin Island. We worked together on tackling the issue of the Chi-Cheemaun. This meant well over \$25 million that was going to be lost if we

didn’t work together in order to get the benefit for people who lived on Manitoulin Island, making sure that the wharf was repaired.

The then Liberal government was punting the ball back to the federal level, saying, “No, no, it’s your responsibility.” We worked together on that issue, and we did get the government to step forward. The funds were put—mind you, I remember the day that I actually went to the docks when there were roughly about 700 people who were at the docks on Manitoulin Island protesting the decision of the government to not get involved. I remember being there, and as I’m stepping out of my car, where unreliable cell service is across northern Ontario—I had one bar—I remember the then Minister of Northern Development and Mines, now the independent member for Thunder Bay–Superior North, was on the phone. He tells me, “Mike, I’ve got some good news for you. We’re going to put the funding forward. We’re going to go to bat and were going to fight with the federal government.” I said, “Are you kidding me? You’re giving me this now when I’m going out and I’m about to blast you for having left us to fall apart?” So I did: I gave credit where credit was due.

I also always recognize my friend from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound as far as working together and getting this solved. That’s what I’m asking our new members to remember: Rise above. Rise above the partisanship and just don’t forget that we’re all here for the same reason: the advancement of Ontario, the economy and moving the issues of our constituents forward.

Another issue: I know the member from Nepean—I hope she’s listening. I would ask my friend from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound to please share this story with her because she needs to know what it meant to me. A lot of the members in the House, when they rise for a speech, grab these very large books. They help us to focus on our notes. I have always used my own. In 2012, on June 23, there was a tragic event that happened in Elliot Lake. It’s something that I always use myself—and I never forget—the two books in regard to what happened with the inquiry up in Elliot Lake and the tragic loss of Doloris Perizzolo and Lucie Aylwin. It’s a reminder to me—they’re always with me at my desk—that there is some unfinished business there. There was some unfinished business with the previous government, the Liberal government, that they didn’t finish the job that was done. I’m going to be looking to this Conservative government to pick up where it was left aside, because there are still a lot of things and a lot of unanswered questions that need to be done on that particular issue.

The point I was trying to make is that I wanted to thank the member from Nepean, because as I was going through this tragedy as a newly elected member—I was brand new, right out of the box, maybe about 11 months into my mandate—the first person who called me was the member from Nepean. She said, “Hey, I’m listening. I’m watching. I hope you’re doing good. I’m watching what you’re doing. Keep it up. You’re on the streets. You’re doing a good job.” I never got a chance to thank her then,

and it took me about six months to get through that process, but I came back and thanked her.

The reason why I share those two stories: These are two individuals who are sitting in government. I want to share that, especially with the new members who are here, because again, I'm asking you to rise up. Rise up beyond the partisanship and make sure that you're there for all Ontarians when we're dealing with the issues that are here.

The motion that we're dealing with today covers four points: "That, in the opinion of this House, the current government is a government for the people." I want to go back to what I just finished saying: You're a government for the people, which means all the people, which means 100% of Ontarians, not just the 40%. There's a lot of things that you have been doing lately, since I've been here, that are only serving those 40%. I don't see the benefits that are coming back to Ontarians in my area.

When I was knocking on doors, I heard from individuals who have various views in regard to their political stripes. So I'm asking you once again: Rise up. Make sure that what you're bringing forward as far as a government who claim to be a government for the people is not just a tagline; it's something that you are doing, that you're bringing forward, making sure that it's true to everyone and not just some of the individuals who are here in this province. And when you are talking about those things, make sure that you are protecting jobs.

1700

I want to share with some of the new members where I came from, because I've been part of your inaugural speeches. I gave my inaugural speech quite some time ago. When I came out of high school, do you know what? I grabbed a chainsaw, shoved it on my shoulder and went into the bush, and I did some forestry work for about four or five years. That's what I did. I came out of the forestry sector and got into sawmilling.

After I was finished with my sawmilling days, that's what opened the doors for me to labour organization. I stepped in wholeheartedly in labour and got the training that I needed. Actually, the tools that we're using here today are the same basic tools that I used as a labour representative. As a labour representative, you use tools as far as preparing arguments, looking at a collective agreement, negotiating, standing up for individuals who are hurt and on WSIB—now, there's a big one.

I heard you, Speaker, and I'm glad you agreed with me that we didn't see that in the throne speech and we have not heard those four letters come out of this government yet: WSIB. There are a lot of people hurting in this province. I didn't hear it in your throne speech; I didn't see it in any of your bullet points. We're going to be talking a lot about people and WSIB. They have been left behind for far too long. They've been hurting for a long time. If you want to help somebody, there are a lot of people hurting in this province. Injured workers have been suffering for a very long time. So standing up for those rights, as well, is part of my background. That's what really prepared me for getting into this role.

What has changed, essentially, is that I'm not dealing with companies and supervisors and so on; I'm dealing with MPPs, bureaucracies, legislation and so on. It's the same basic tools, and I've learned from grassroots members in regard to how to perform my job and what I do here, again respecting the views of each and every individual who is in my riding or was within my bargaining unit. Whether you liked what we were negotiating at the table or not, you still heard those views, and it was democratically represented when you made the decisions that were there. It was democratically done, not with a hammer.

There are other things that 60% of Ontarians have been asking for. "What are you going to do about my hydro bill?" I hear it, and I've heard it from a variety of individuals in regard to how we're going to tackle the hydro issue. The 12% that this government is offering: That's relief? Really? That's the best you can do?

The message you're sending—for the previous year, I was the critic for northern development and mines, and I was also the critic for Indigenous relations and reconciliation, so when I hear the new members across the way heckle that I'm anti-mining, my goodness. That's like saying that I'm anti-northern Ontario. I'm as northern Ontario as they come. I'm a small-town northern Ontario forestry guy going into the bush, trapping with my kids, hunting, four-wheeler, mud-playing. It's hard for me to swallow some of the heckling that comes across the way.

Again, I'm asking the members to rise up. Rise up beyond that. Let's look at each other and let's start dealing with some of the issues as far as what we need to work on. How are you going to be able to help me? How can I help you do your job, as well? It's building those relationships and building those bridges. But again, we've got to get through this huff and puff as far as coming back, you know, "Rah, rah, rah! We got 76 seats and you didn't, so we're in power." All right. At the end of the day, get rid of those taglines and let's start working for the benefit of all Ontarians.

I'm going to go back to Elliot Lake and Manitoulin Island. A lot of people are going to be asking me, "What are you going to do about wait times?" Now, the message that you've just delivered to them, with some of the funding that you're cutting, is very problematic and very concerning to them. There was the previous Liberal government, which indicated there was going to be a certain level of funding that was going to go toward mental health and some of the crises that we're having in our hospitals. Some \$330 million has been cut—gone, no longer there. We're going to have to come up with that somewhere. Is it going to be taken out of our services? What jobs are going to be lost? What services are going to be lost? Who is going to suffer from those decisions? What schools aren't going to get the repairs they're rightfully entitled to?

The member from Tecumseh—I hope I get enough time that I can get back to the point that he brought forward. I hope I can get back to raising one of the concerns I have, that I've approached the Minister of Educa-

tion about with regard to a problem that I'm having, where parents are voicing their concerns with regard to having their voices silenced by having their trustee from their local school board removed or excused from his participation at the board level. He still continues to have the ability to perform the tasks as a trustee; however, he has been removed.

If you want to get involved in fixing certain things, this is one of them. I've approached the minister and the minister has basically said, "Listen, I'm not getting involved. It's a board decision at this point in time," but I have had hundreds of complaints from parents who have tried to bring their issue forward, where their voices are not being heard.

I'm going to be putting in a petition, and I'll ask one of the pages to come up and grab the petition, please, and bring it down to the Clerks' table. I want the Clerks to review this petition as to its proper format to make sure I can introduce it later on in the House. Their democratic right and the right of the elected trustee who has been silenced and has been told, "No, you can't come to the board anymore"—the process that was followed is questionable.

Last week, many of the parents on Manitoulin Island gathered in one of the halls and questioned what exactly had happened. It is frightening and it is quite concerning for me, as the MPP, to find out a lot of the issues that were raised at that meeting by parents. We're going to have to challenge those issues. Those are some of the things that are being done.

We still have schools in my area that have lead in their water. We still have schools that are crumbling, that are being shut down. But in the meantime, parents are questioning how it is that the board approved a 32% wage increase to a director. How did that happen? How did an individual get \$60,000 when we have schools that are crumbling and we have lead in our schools? How is it that this board had the ability to find a million dollars in order to further a project within the community of Sudbury, a bubble soccer dome, where the then Minister of Energy made an announcement in Sudbury that instead of a private company having the ability to build this dome and wanting some assistance, the then Liberal member actually gave a million dollars of taxpayer money to the school board to build a soccer dome? In the meantime, there is still deterioration going on in those schools.

The trustee is sitting at home and his voice has been silenced. The frustration of parents is escalating and people are asking questions. The response that I get from the minister is, "I'm not getting involved. At this point in time, it's a board decision."

There have been some decisions where the Ombudsman has been involved and the Ombudsman has directed the board to follow their own policies. That's one issue.

I look forward to working with the minister and I hope she reconsiders looking into this matter, because there are a lot of upset parents on Manitoulin Island who believe that the dollars they're paying towards this board need to be held accountable.

1710

It brings me to one of the points that is contained within this bill: "To restore accountability and trust in government," and I get a no. I bring you a question of restoring accountability and trust, and you're telling me, "I'm not getting involved"? That's what I'm going back to my constituents with? That's what they should expect from this minister?

Listen, I want to go back to the point I said earlier and that I keep stressing: We need to rise up in this House in regard to how we're going to be addressing issues. We need to rise up and not always point the finger and say, "You, you, you." We need to look at the other three that are pointing towards me when we're making decisions, that when we're pointing that finger, there are three more options that are being pointed towards me. We need to rise up.

There's a lot of problems that we have across this province: cutting, eliminating the GreenON fund, the cap-and-trade. The dollars that you guys are taking out of this is costing jobs in my riding. It's putting people and businesses in very tough financial hardship, and you need to find a way to reverse that decision.

The time has gone by, Speaker, and I wish I had more, because I didn't even get to these. But again—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Ms. Karpoche assumes ballot item number 44 and Mr. Hatfield assumes ballot number 13.

Further debate?

Mr. Ross Romano: I rise to speak to the motion presently before the House. I do want to thank the member from Algoma-Manitoulin for his words—my neighbouring riding. Actually, more than just a neighbour; sort of surrounding my riding of Sault Ste. Marie.

I've listened for the last few days—weeks, really—since I've had the privilege of being part of this party and part of a government that is, indeed, for the people: the people of this province, from all sectors of this province, and the people of, yes, my riding of Sault Ste. Marie. It's an honour to serve those people. I've listened to the words used by the opposition since we formed government, and I find some of this very troubling. I heard a comment today about speaking out of both sides of your mouth, and I kind of chuckled when I heard that, because that's really what I've heard the opposition do since we got here. In one breath, for the last several weeks, while we've discussed certain legislation, primarily Bill 2 at the time, I heard that while this was something that we campaigned on specifically, there were complaints that these were bad things, for any number of different reasons, and likened to things like the Chicken Little argument: that the sky's going to fall if we do these things. They were campaigned on very specifically. These were areas that we outlined in our campaign. Now we come to this legislation today and the attack from the opposition is:

"You didn't say it in the campaign; therefore we shouldn't be doing this."

If we recall—and I'm sure that we all dealt with this during the campaign period—we all ran as a party, obviously, on our platform. I know in my riding of Sault Ste. Marie the continual attack that I saw from the now official opposition party was that we didn't have a platform. That really never sat well with me, because I always felt, long before I decided to get involved in politics, that as elections came and went, as a constituent I always felt very disenchanting, disenfranchised with politics, because I've always heard these politicians making all of these different promises coming up to elections, promises that they never kept. I always felt, isn't it more important to just know who the person is that I'm going to be hopefully voting for, know what their guiding principles are, know what it is that they are about? When we formed our platform, I was very encouraged and I thought, "This is perfect. This is exactly what I believe our province, and certainly my community, needs." I think all the people of Ontario clearly agreed: What they wanted was a government that would make life more affordable for them and put more money in their pocket. Who can ever argue with that? From all parties, whether you're with the NDP, the Liberals, the Green Party or the PC Party, who can disagree that people want life to be more affordable, that people want more money in their pockets? Shouldn't that be a goal of every party, of every person in office? Of course it should be, so I was proud to stand up and say that as a party, we will make life more affordable for our constituents, that we will put more money in your pocket.

We looked at our hydro crisis. Nobody can deny that we have a hydro crisis in this province. Our hydro rates escalated in those 15 years under a Liberal government by 300%. Who can possibly deny that our constituents, the people we work for, the people we represent, need their hydro rates brought under control? Who can really deny what caused the mess with our hydro rates? The problem with our hydro rates came from the creation of energy that we don't need, that we didn't need. We never needed that energy and we continually produced energy we didn't need, spilling water, hydro, good green energy we had because we didn't need all this mass power we were creating.

Who wouldn't want to reduce hydro rates for their constituents? That's what we're all fighting to do. That was a guiding principle, a guiding principle that was easy for us to stand by—easy for me to stand in front of my constituents, the people who I wanted to serve, and say, "This is what our government will do for you."

Health care is another area of major concern. Hospital wait times are out of control. People are being treated in hallways. Through the 15 years of Liberal government, we did not see the health issue improve. In fact, we got further into a crisis. Again I ask you, all members from all parties, who wouldn't want to see an improvement in health care?

It was easy to stand up and say, "These are things that we want to see prioritized. These are things that we want

to see improved for our constituents." I was very proud to stand behind that principle because it is an important one. Certainly for all of us—I think very much for the members from Algoma-Manitoulin and all of our northern Ontario ridings, and for me in Sault Ste. Marie—there was a major issue looking at trying to create job growth, trying to see not simply maintaining the jobs we have, because for the last number of years, for decades in northern Ontario, we have seen people leave our ridings. We have seen our youth migrating out for jobs elsewhere. We have seen a reduction in our workforce.

Of course we want to see more jobs. Everybody does—not just in the north, but certainly as members for northern Ontario ridings, we want to see increased job growth. We want to bring jobs to our province. There is no shortage of complaints to make on how that was prioritized over the last 15 years when we saw over 300,000 jobs in manufacturing alone leave the province of Ontario. We, sadly, have become a province that is not competitive. That's what we've turned into, and we need to improve that.

When I campaigned to be the MPP for Sault Ste. Marie, I was very proud of the guiding principles we had set, very proud of them. The last one, of course, is restoring trust and accountability in government. Numerous times our Premier, Premier Doug Ford, toured across this province saying he wanted to see a reduction in the size of government, not an increase in the size of it. He wanted to see us be more transparent. He wanted to see a government where when the people said, "Jump," we say, "How high?" That's what government should be all about. That's what we are all about.

1720

When I hear complaints such as those heard today, it doesn't make a lot of sense. They're saying, "Well, you didn't specifically say you were going to do this." No, we were elected with a mandate by the people to fight for the people of this province, to work on our five principle areas, and that's what we are doing.

I am very proud to see that we are taking those steps. While most governments would be sitting on the sidelines today, right now, enjoying their summer holidays, we're here working for the people. We're here making changes for the people, to reduce the size of government, to make life more affordable, to make your hydro rates more affordable. That's what we're doing.

So to hear complaints and to hear the other side reach out and say, "We've got to figure out ways to work together," I agree wholeheartedly. We must find ways to work together. Listen to your own constituents; constituents you know want more accountability and trust in government, constituents you know want better health care services, constituents you know want to have more money in their pockets, constituents you know want more jobs in their communities and who want more affordable hydro rates. That is what we are all here for.

I'm very happy to be a part of a party and a part of a government that is actually working for the people, not

against them; that is actually making promises and keeping them, not forming 180-some-odd-page platforms that they have no ability to carry out, throwing money away that they don't have; that has these imaginary money trees in their backyard that they think we can just continually pluck from. We don't have them.

We need to be realistic. We need to be the adults in the room. I am really happy that we are those adults in the room. I'm really happy to see that we are keeping the promises we made.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It is my pleasure to rise on behalf of my constituents in Windsor West to talk about this motion before me. I'm going to read the motion in case anybody is just tuning in now or they want to go back. My constituents are likely very interested in what I say, so I will read the motion.

It says: "That, in the opinion of this House, the current government is a government for the people with a clear mandate to pursue policies that put more money in people's pockets; create and protect jobs; address the hydro crisis; reduce hospital wait times; and restore accountability and trust in government."

If you listen to what the member from Sault Ste. Marie just said—and I suspect other members from the government side, the Conservative side, have said the same thing—they talk about how they have been given a mandate to go out and do these things. So I ask this: If you believe you were given a mandate to go out and do these things, if you believe in less government—

Interjections.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I mean, if you believe in democracy, why do you need a motion—if you believe you were elected and given a mandate to do these things, why are we debating a motion on these things, when we could be talking about so many other things?

We could be debating other things. But instead, they are taking up time in the Legislature to basically talk about themselves and how wonderful they are.

Applause.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'm not sure that's something the government side should have applauded. I'm sure there is a name for that kind of thing and I'm also certain that if I was to use that word, I would be told to withdraw, so I won't.

Mr. Bill Walker: Try it.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: "Arrogance" comes to mind.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock. A reminder, again, to all members that this is a parliamentary debate and while I appreciate the collegiality and enthusiasm and encouragement, I am sure that the member from Windsor West can do just fine without all of the encouragement. Thank you.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

So, again, I ask, why do we need this motion? Why are we debating—legislative time—a motion the government believes they were already given a mandate to do?

We could have spent time hearing from the people of Toronto—there's a novel idea—before they slashed council nearly in half. We actually could have had a fulsome debate on that. It could have gone to committee. We could have had consultation. But instead, we have a motion before us discussing a mandate that they believe they were already given. Why do we need to debate it, why do we need to vote on it, if they believe that was their mandate?

The other thing we could be talking about is the fact that the Conservatives, during the election, talked about minimum wage and how they were not going to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, that it was absolutely not going to happen. Now-Premier Ford had explicitly said during the campaign promise that he would roll back the increase coming next year. There were years of work from workers and labour activists that made that movement happen, that made the increase from \$14 an hour to \$15 an hour happen, and yet we have Conservatives who promised that they would stop that from happening.

It's interesting, because they talk about putting more money in people's pockets, and yet minimum wage earners have more money in their pockets with a higher minimum wage than they do or will have with the tax cuts that the Conservatives have promised. If you really want people to have more money in their pockets, raise minimum wage like it was supposed to be.

Now, we know, based on history and the Conservative government before this one, that they don't want people to have more money in their pockets, not average working people—only their friends and their well-connected insiders. There is a saying that the proof is in the pudding. The proof of that was that the last Conservative government not once raised minimum wage. What was it? I believe it was \$6.85 an hour. Not once did they raise it.

During that exact same Conservative government, they slashed social assistance. People living on social assistance had their funds cut. Not once during the throne speech did they talk about people living on social assistance. In fact, it's pretty clear that those are not the people this Conservative government is for. Again, the proof is in the pudding. By cancelling cap-and-trade, \$7 million in Windsor alone has been clawed back that was going to go into social housing. Low-income earners: It's not those people that they're for. They are not looking to put money in those people's pockets. So I'm asking, who, then? Who are these people that you're for? Because it certainly isn't those people.

Is it for people who are struggling to get their prescription medication when they need it, people who need dental care? Is it those people? Nope, it's not those people either. It's not for people who are struggling to get by. It's for their own friends and their insiders. They have their own agenda, and clearly, by what they just did earlier today, cutting city council seats here in Toronto in nearly half, what they are trying to do is take care of their own people.

Madam Speaker, we all know that when people are healthier, when they have access to dental care, when

they have access to the prescription medications that they need, when they have more money, they are more productive and they contribute to the economy. But instead of recognizing that and investing in those people, this government has not talked about them once. Not once. In fact, what they have done is they have dragged us all backwards and made it harder for those people.

This government had promised during the election to cut \$6.1 billion. Where is it coming from? Where is that going to come from? Interestingly enough, that's pretty darn close to how much the social housing needs are in Windsor. You've actually clawed back more than that from Windsor, but it's pretty darned close to what we need in Windsor to address our social housing needs.

1730

We also have cycling infrastructure that is affected by this Conservative government. In a little less than the two months that they have been in government, we have already seen \$7 million in social housing evaporate in Windsor alone. We've seen \$1.6 million for cycling infrastructure in Windsor, again, evaporate. This is not a government for those people. It's certainly not a government for the people in Windsor, and I think that was made pretty clear when Windsor once again elected all New Democrats with an incredibly strong mandate.

There are 700 people using a food bank every day—every day—in Windsor. This government not once mentioned helping anybody who needs to access a food bank—not once.

They're not helping anybody by cancelling the programs like cap-and-trade that our municipalities rely on to provide cycling infrastructure, to provide for repairs and upkeep and potentially to build new social housing.

They not once mentioned our manufacturing or automotive sectors—not once. No talk about an auto strategy—well, actually, Madam Speaker, I need to correct my record. They did mention, in a roundabout way, our auto and manufacturing sector when they said that they were going to cut the Jobs and Prosperity Fund, a fund that actually invested in that sector. Madam Speaker, I know that you have a GM plant in your riding as well; there are lots of members in this House who have auto. We are considered the automotive capital, in Windsor; we can still say that even though we lost GM.

By cancelling the Jobs and Prosperity Fund—they call it a slush fund, by the way; I want to point that out. They call it a slush fund. It's a fund that goes into investing in research and development, into R&D; a fund that goes into training; a fund that goes into keeping our auto and our other manufacturing here in the province. I realize that the government side probably isn't aware of this. They have little interest in Windsor generally because we don't vote Conservative down that way. But I want them to know that thousands of people rely on our auto and manufacturing sector in Windsor alone, and that's just Windsor—tens of thousands of people. Expand that across the province. They want to cut a fund that actually helps?

In fact, the Conservatives have a history of attacking the auto sector. They want to see the auto sector die.

They didn't want to see investment. They called it "corporate welfare."

Interjections.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I want to make a point. You may think it's terrible, but it's the truth. It's your record. Your caucus and your member said it.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Whatever.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It's not "whatever" to the tens of thousands of people who rely on the auto sector.

They call it "corporate welfare"—

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Speak the truth.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I am speaking the truth, although the government doesn't like to hear the truth.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I think that was the member from Perth-Wellington. He needs to withdraw.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Or it may have been the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

If there is a member who would like to withdraw, to clear their name, potentially—I would like to recognize the Minister of Natural Resources.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I'll withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It was all John Yakabuski's fault.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member from Timmins will come to order.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry may not like hearing what I'm saying, but it was his team that had said it.

Anyway, there was no mention of an auto strategy. They think the Jobs and Prosperity Fund is a slush fund. They believe that any investment into our auto or manufacturing sector is corporate welfare. They don't believe in these companies, many of whom received funding that they actually paid back, and then some.

All we have to do is to look at what they've recently done with the educators at York University. They mandated them back to work. They legislated them back to work, stripped them of their right to strike and mandated them back to work. We know that's what Conservatives do—they don't believe in unions and they don't believe in collective bargaining; we understand that—but what they haven't done is that they haven't looked at why those people were out on strike in the first place.

They didn't talk about the fact that many of those people are part-time, precariously or unstably employed people, and that many of them are struggling to get by, much like those who work in our college sector. They're struggling to get by themselves, and this government hasn't talked about it. It was just, "Shame on them for being out on strike and trying to make a better life for themselves"—and for the students, because some of those students are going to graduate, and guess what? They're going to want to go work at a university

themselves, and they're going to be in the same position as those who are trying to teach them and lead them now. The Conservatives aren't addressing that. They're not about creating full-time, stable jobs for the faculty within our post-secondary institutions. What they're about is stripping them of their rights to free and collective bargaining. That's what they're about. They're not for those people.

Then we have to look at the GreenON contracts. The government is ripping up those contracts. That means revenue and job losses for contractors. Some spent a great deal of money training employees, and they've lost that money now. If you want to talk about being responsible with money, it doesn't mean you just walk in and say, "I don't like this program. I'm ripping up a contract," without thinking about what the repercussions are for that, because that is money that employers have spent training their employees or that employees may have gone and spent on their own.

The penalties and the fees for ripping up contracts is money that this Conservative government is going to pass on to the people of the province. The people they say they're for are who are going to pay for what this Conservative government is doing. It's not those people that they're for, not the ones who are going to pick up the tab for a rash decision that they've made.

Then we talk about hydro and the hydro crisis, Madam Speaker. This one is a really tough one to swallow, because it was the last Conservative government that started the privatization of hydro in the first place. In 2014, in that election, they ran on a platform of privatizing hydro, so how can they sit here now and pretend to be supportive of the people of this province? "We want to consult, except for the people of Toronto." We don't want to consult the people of Toronto when it comes to slashing their local representation; we wouldn't want to do that. We just want to consult the far-right-wing extremists within the Conservative team when it comes to the health and physical education curriculum. Those are the people we're going to consult.

They want people to believe that they are actually supportive of lowering hydro costs, that they have a plan to do so, but the fact of the matter is that it was the Conservatives that started the privatization of hydro. Did the Liberals pick up the ball and run with it? Absolutely, they did, but they were following the lead of the Conservatives. In fact, the last Conservative government was taken to court and challenged by CUPE, the same union that challenged the Liberals when it came to privatizing hydro. The only reason they had backed down—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Public outrage.

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Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Public outrage. They actually listened to the people of this province.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Those were the days.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Those were the good old days.

They talk about reducing wait times in hospitals, but how?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I would again remind all members that there is a debate going on and it's not just an opportunity to make noise. Thank you.

You may continue.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'm going to have to skip ahead because I'm almost out of time. But I want to ask this government: What do accountability and trust even mean to them? Because just today, we voted on a bill to interfere in municipal elections in the middle of an election, with no consultation. I just want to point out—because, to me, this is a really important point to make and I know I'm going to run out of time—that we have a Premier who is now saying that it was okay for him to meddle in municipal elections, it's okay for him to do that, that the people of this province gave him a mandate to reduce government, that the people were telling him they don't want any more politicians.

All you have to do is look at the Ford family. The Premier's father was a politician. His brother was a politician. His nephew is a politician. He, himself, whether he likes to admit it or not, is a politician. What this province needs less of are Ford politicians. That's what we need less of. If the Premier wants to have smaller governments, maybe he should look at his own. Maybe he needs to look within his own, because this is not a government that is for all of the people. It's a government that's for a select few who have the same ideals as they do, who have the deep pockets to make it happen and the backrooms to make the deals in.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'd like to start off by commending you for sitting in the chair. I know you're going to do a fine job and you're going to allow us to have vigorous debate in here at all times. I'm going to try to add to that today.

It's truly my pleasure to be able to speak to the member from Windsor West. My struggle is that I've only got about 15 minutes, and I've got about 40 minutes' worth of information to get out, but I'm going to do my best.

What I'm going to start off with: She couldn't really understand why we were debating this motion. I just want to point out to her and her colleagues that if we didn't have reasoned amendments that keep coming through on their behalf, we could have been debating things two days ago that they wanted to debate. So at some point you have to be able to be honest with all of the people and say, "We're part of the issue here. We're putting reasoned amendments, which are delaying, so this other debate is now being held today to be able to do that."

She talked a fair bit about mandate in her early comments, about how this isn't the mandate for the people. I'm not going to stand here and try to sound preachy, Madam Speaker. I'm going to go through you to her. But I want her to understand that in this democracy, 76 seats—whether she likes it or doesn't like it; whether

anybody likes it or doesn't like it—form a majority government in the province of Ontario. That's democracy.

People obviously said, "Well, we can choose from the PC plan, we can choose from the NDP platform, the Liberal platform or the Green"—and in my case I had five or six others as well, but we'll stick to those. They had a \$7-billion gap in the NDP platform, Madam Speaker, which I know you're aware of. At the end of the day, I'm not certain people, obviously, chose us because of just that one gap.

They talked about wanting to close Pickering nuclear, and 7,000 jobs could have been at stake. They, I think, probably went back—and I want to talk about my good friend from Windsor—Tecumseh, because I think he just made a comment about, "Those were the days." I think he was referring to the Rae days, perhaps. I know people in my riding talked about those Rae days that they certainly haven't forgotten. They could not even come to grips with thinking we would go through that type of a nightmare after 15 years of the Liberal Premier Kathleen Wynne reign of terror. We just could not fathom that.

I want to remind the member again that her party, when she was here—and I would forgive those who are new members who haven't been part of this—they actually propped up the Liberals for two budgets to allow a lot of things like the Green Energy Act to continue. They allowed things like the horse racing industry to be decimated. Now, they didn't vote for that one; they sat on their hands on that one. But it's the same thing, Madam Speaker. So it's interesting to hear what she was talking about on some of those points, but she didn't provide both sides of that debate.

They continued in their platform to have things in there about the cap-and-trade—and I believe one of their members wanted the highest rates in the world, Madam Speaker. Most people are saying to me in my riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, as I trust most of our collective ridings are, "We want lower prices. We want lower taxes. It's so hard to live in Ontario these days under the Liberal government." Why would we want to go with even higher rates? The highest in the world, I believe that member—and I won't name them; I think they know who they are. At the end of the day, I want to just make sure that we're talking about both sides of this debate, making sure we're bringing all of the people into it.

In this motion, we're talking about things that she says are not really that important, but I would suggest to you that as critic for long-term care for two and a half years, I travelled the province and I heard every single area of the province saying, "I'm very concerned about hallway health care. I'm extremely concerned that there are not enough beds for seniors, for my loved ones to have a long-term-care bed." So our government committed in our plan, when we went to the vote, to 15,000 beds over the first five years and 30,000 beds over 10 years, Madam Speaker.

At the end of the day, I think that's a very important thing to be talking about. I believe the people of Ontario definitely want us to be talking about that and debating

that and ensuring, in fact, that we move on and we take action to do that.

We talk in this motion about accountability and trust. I want to talk about my colleague from Bay of Quinte, the House leader and the Minister of Consumer Services. Madam Speaker, he campaigned in three different elections on: "If you support me, if you bring me back to Queen's Park, I will fight to get rid of the White Pines project in my riding," which the people did not—they were an unwilling host, and the Liberals tried to ram it through. The opposition today—

Hon. John Yakabuski: And they were enabled by the NDP.

Mr. Bill Walker: Enabled by the NDP; you are correct. Even today, they're talking about contracts. By supporting the Liberals—we could have cancelled a number of contracts without any penalty, without one cent to the taxpayers, but they did enable and they did support that.

So I am very proud to stand here to say, about accountability and trust, what that member and all of our members stand behind when we stand in this House and say we're going to do something: Promise made—

Interjections:—promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: So there's another one, Madam Speaker.

The Green Energy Act, as we say, was going to cost 133 billion more dollars. We've said that since the day I got here in 2011, that this is not a good piece of legislation. It's not about the environment. It's really about big business. They had already had cash-for-access dinners. They took accountability away and actually democracy away from the local representatives. We said that we would get rid of that, that we would put a moratorium—

Hon. John Yakabuski: Who was propping them up through all this?

Mr. Bill Walker: Well, the NDP, I think, if someone is asking that question to me in the House. I think the NDP were propping them up. Enabling them, I think, might be the other word.

At the end of the day, we said that we would get rid of the Green Energy Act and we would put a moratorium on any wind turbines. Promise made—

Interjections:—promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: Madam Speaker, the Premier campaigned on a promise to get rid of the CEO and the board of Hydro One. People said that it couldn't be done. I believe many members of the opposition said that this will never—

Hon. John Yakabuski: Zero severance.

Mr. Bill Walker: It was zero severance; you are correct. The Minister of Transportation is bang on when he says that: zero severance. They're going to try to spin that it's X, Y, Z—

Interjection.

Mr. Bill Walker: Those were all negotiated by a Liberal government that, again, the NDP propped up and enabled.

At the end of the day, Madam Speaker, I want to share with the House—

Hon. John Yakabuski: Is the CEO gone?

Mr. Bill Walker: The CEO is gone. Promise made—

Interjections: —promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: The board: Promise made—

Interjections: —promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: So there's all kinds of these things that we're still talking about.

We want to ensure that the people out there, who were talking about more money in their pockets—she said that there is not more money in people's pockets. She's making that assumption, that there's not more money. But I believe that if we reduce that 10 cents per litre on gas, that's going to put a lot more money back.

I know a colleague here from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, now the Honourable Minister of Transportation, at least seven times in this House brought up a private member's bill to actually share the gas tax across every municipality in Ontario. That was defeated all seven times, I believe, with the Liberals and—I'm not certain for sure, and he might be able to correct me if I'm wrong, whether the NDP supported or enabled that legislation or didn't support us. But at the end of the day, that could have put a lot more money—because who spends more money on gasoline than the people in rural Ontario, who have to drive to get everywhere?

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Hon. John Yakabuski: Now we're going to put it right in their pockets.

Mr. Bill Walker: We're going to put it directly into their pockets and give them the choice of where they want to spend their money, which will then start the economy all over again and ramp it up.

The Premier campaigned and we campaigned, as the PC team, on less money through gas, less money at the pumps. Promise made—

Hon. John Yakabuski: —promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's going to be kept, absolutely.

Madam Speaker, I want to change gears for a second, because I know that if I don't I'm going to get ramped up here and I'm going to forget.

My good colleague from Algoma–Manitoulin, in his little bit of time that he shared with us today, talked about decorum. He wanted us to rise up and work together. He shared a couple of examples—one with me, working on the Chi-Cheemaun. It stops in the great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula, Tobermory, where the Chi-Cheemaun takes off and goes across to South Baymouth and, of course, returns and brings people from great northern Ontario.

Our minister is doing a great job to put time, money, energy and resources back into northern Ontario. I know that the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane is going to be very supportive of that, because he's on our side all the way, I believe, with Timiskaming–Cochrane in northern Ontario. So I'm excited to see that we can work with him like we are with the member from Algoma–Manitoulin.

He shared that we worked together on a project, and it was all about dockage. It was all about the ferry being able to come in and dock, which has a huge impact on northern Ontario's economy—it certainly has a huge impact in my riding; frankly, it's the economy of all of Ontario—because people are coming through, it's vacation time, it's getting goods and services. A lot of agricultural resources are transferred back and forth on that ferry. We worked very hard together, and we can work together. I think his whole message was, "How do we work together? How do we rise up?"

I just want to share that, because there are a number of colleagues across the aisle—and I'm only going to name a couple, because I'll probably forget a couple. My friends from Windsor–Tecumseh, Timiskaming–Cochrane, Nickel Belt, London–Fanshawe and the member from Oshawa—we get along very well, and I think we can all work together.

We can raise the decorum and ensure that we're doing the right things for all Ontarians when we're here in the House if we just drop some of that political banter. I'd just like, for once, particularly, for the member for Windsor West to say, "I agree with what you're doing. I agree that 15,000 more long-term-care beds is a great thing. I'm proud to debate it with you, and frankly, I'm going to support it." I'd like her to enable our government to actually do it the way she enabled the last Liberal government to do a lot of things.

The Premier said that we would open up—

Interjections.

Mr. Bill Walker: Join me and work together.

I'm a big nuclear guy. Obviously, Bruce Power is next door to me in the riding. I worked in a nuclear plant. I hope that they'll be able to sit down with their leader, who seems to be a little angry at times and very challenging with what we're doing—I hope they'll revisit the whole Pickering shutdown, because that's 7,000 direct jobs. There are tons of indirect jobs. I can tell you that at Bruce Power they're going to refurb the remaining six units. I was there working on the unit 1 refurb. Unit 2, of course, has been done. The ripple effect—the indirect and direct jobs that will produce and the clean, green, low-cost energy that's 24/7, not intermittent Green Energy Act power. And what do we do when we don't have enough wind or solar? We actually fire up a gas plant. That's not the most environmentally sound thing that we want to be doing out there. So I'm hopeful that they'll revisit that, because there's a huge opportunity to create a lot of really good-paying jobs—like the auto industry in your riding, Madam Speaker. There's a lot of ripple effect if we make sure that we create the conditions. The highest energy rates in North America have certainly not helped us to maintain that industry and our advantage in that industry.

Again, I say to the member, respectfully, some of your members campaigned on wanting to have even higher rates. I heard all the time from businesses, "I'm not going to expand in Ontario. In fact, I'm probably going to leave Ontario." It's shameful for all of us to even hear those words.

Hon. John Yakabuski: Don't leave.

Mr. Bill Walker: We don't want them to leave. We want to make sure that we actually have jobs for our children in the next generation, because let's not forget that \$330 billion has been put on the bank card of all Ontarians, particularly young Ontarians, by that Liberal government that was propped up, enabled, by an NDP government.

We need to start doing things to get our economy rolling. I know that our Premier, being a business person, is looking through a filter, saying, "How do we make Ontario open for business again? How do we say to the world, 'Come to Ontario'?" He has already toured a number of states, he has worked with a number of governors, even with the free trade initiatives that are going on, to ensure that Ontario is at the table making a difference.

Minister Wilson went down to Washington just a week or so ago because his—

Hon. John Yakabuski: Mr. Wilson goes to Washington.

Mr. Bill Walker: Mr. Wilson goes to Washington, yes, and a great job he did when he went to Washington.

His whole mandate was to protect, maintain and actually create an environment in Ontario with lower energy rates to ensure that we are creating jobs so that the next generation has hope and the willingness to stay in Ontario and not move to the other provinces—because they are moving forward, in many cases, without us because of the damage done by 15 years of Liberal reign.

Madam Speaker, we have to—and I hope the member from Windsor West and all of her colleagues will support this. How could you not support a government for the people? Most of us should have a plate on our desk that reminds us every day: "For the People."

Hon. John Yakabuski: I have one.

Mr. Bill Walker: You have one?

Hon. John Yakabuski: I have one.

Mr. Bill Walker: Does anyone else have one?

Interjection: I've got one.

Mr. Bill Walker: We would make them available for you if you would put them on your desks. I'm sure the Premier would send one across to each of you tomorrow if you would like that and know that you're going to support us on "For the People": more jobs, 15,000 beds for long-term care, a clear mandate to pursue policies that put more money in people's pockets. Lower hydro rates, more money in people's pockets. Promise made—

Interjections:—promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: Ten cents off your gas. Promise made—

Interjections:—promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: Lower energy rates. CEO gone—\$4.5 million. Just remember this: Under the Liberal regime, we paid the CEO of Hydro One \$4.5 million, compared to—

Hon. John Yakabuski: Over six. He got the little raise over six.

Mr. Bill Walker: Up over \$6 million with the little bonus, yes. Quebec and BC Hydro, their equivalent CEOs were at \$450,000. That's 10 times more. I'm not certain how anybody, even an NDP member, could support 10 times more.

Now, maybe if it was the dairy industry, I know one guy who might support that, but I still think he would come back because he's very good at math. We're still kind of wondering why he's on that side and not over here. We're really glad—

Mr. John Vanthof: As long as you don't go over nine and a half.

Mr. Bill Walker: We'll stay at nine and a half just for you, the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane. You bring sound balance to that side of the House. We're worried that if you weren't there—although, Mr. Mantha, you're probably a close second, and, sorry, Mr. Hatfield: Windsor-Tecumseh and Algoma-Manitoulin. You probably can count, but not quite as good as the nine-and-a-half-digit guy.

Madam Speaker, I'm trying to stay very much on topic here.

We want to create and protect jobs. As I said, Minister Wilson goes to Washington with a full mandate to ensure that we're negotiating face to face. The premier business person is there face to face and is making inroads already. He has been to the Premiers' round table and, again, is already forging relationships there to say, "How can we do more trade across our provinces?"

It's hard to fathom that, for 15 years, the Liberal government, with all the opportunity that we had—they had more money; they had the highest revenues. I think the Minister of Northern Development and Mines said today that it's never been a revenue problem; it has been a spending problem. At the end of the day, even across all of our provinces, why can't we open the borders? Why can't we ensure that all that money is staying?

That leads me back, again, to cap-and-trade, which they continue to support and want to bring back. Even though we campaigned and we won 76 seats saying we were going to get rid of the cap-and-trade, they want to bring that back.

I can't fathom that whole idea, that you would actually support—and I know the Green member, as well. I challenge him every day in here that he supports that type of thing, where they want to actually allow people to pay to pollute. There was nothing in that cap-and-trade that actually made them lower emissions. All they could do was get out a chequebook and say, "Yeah, here it is."

Most of that money, frankly, was leaving Ontario. It wasn't going to help jobs; it wasn't going to help people on lower incomes here. It was going to go to California for the most part, and over the years it would be billions and billions of dollars going to support their economy, support their health care, support their schools, not here in Ontario.

So I can't believe that the NDP and/or the Green and/or the individual members who were elected as a seven-person group of individuals would support cap-and-trade again. That's an over-and-done—the Premier

said in our election campaign, "If I get in, cap-and-trade will be gone." Promise made—

Interjections: —promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: Madam Speaker, I'm trying to wind up here.

Hydro crisis: When the word "crisis" is used, when the word "crisis" is in the title of anything, you know that somebody is very distraught and very concerned at the state of affairs that we find ourselves in. I can tell you that when I was out on the campaign trail, and for four and a half years before that, hydro became and continued to be the biggest issue I heard from people, whether it was people on fixed income, low income or the less fortunate, who are doubly hit by those type of things, because how do they choose? We kept hearing, "I don't know whether I can afford to heat or to eat." Madam Speaker, that's deplorable in the great province of Ontario.

Interjection: Thirty seconds.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thirty seconds? I thought I had three minutes.

Accountability and trust is the other thing. We have to ensure that there is always trust, that when you stand up and make a promise, you know that you are able to carry that through. In just two and a half weeks, our Premier and our party have already brought home a number of things.

I am just finally going to summarize in my last two seconds to say that this government is here for the people. Promise made, promise kept.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1800.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, William Short

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les îles	
Baber, Roman (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Downey, Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	
Dunlop, Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Guratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop
John Fraser, Wayne Gates
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Vacant
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Stephen Crawford, Doug Downey
Sol Mamakwa, David Piccini
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw
Donna Skelly
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Vacant
Jessica Bell, Lorne Coe
Chris Glover, Christine Hogarth
Logan Kanapathi, Daryl Kramp
Natalia Kusendova, Amarjot Sandhu
Mike Schreiner, Dave Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: Vacant
Roman Baber, Rudy Cuzzetto
Amy Fee, Vincent Ke
Andrea Khanjin, Marie-France Lalonde
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls
Jeremy Roberts, Marit Stiles
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
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Ross Romano, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria
Sara Singh, Monique Taylor
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**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

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Michael Coteau, Mike Harris
Faisal Hassan, Jane McKenna
Christina Mitas, Sam Oosterhoff
Amanda Simard, Gurratan Singh
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Vacant
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Jim McDonell, Norman Miller
Suze Morrison, Michael Parsa
Peggy Sattler, Kinga Surma
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Vacant
Toby Barrett, Will Bouma
Mike Harris, Randy Hillier
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo
Paul Miller, Billy Pang
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Vacant
Deepak Anand, Roman Baber
Doly Begum, Jeff Burch
Amy Fee, Michael Gravelle
Joel Harden, Belinda Karahalios
Robin Martin, Nina Tangri
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie